

**PUNJAB PAST AND PRESENT**  
**ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF DR GANDA SINGH**



PUNJAB PAST AND PRESENT  
ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF  
DR GANDA SINGH

*edited by*

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## FOREWORD

The Punjābī University takes pride in having this volume compiled in honour of Dr Gandā Singh, one of India's leading historians today. He is widely known for his scholarship and for his outstanding work in his area of special expertise. In Punjāb historiography, he enjoys patriarchal status. The contribution he has made to the study and understanding of the history of the Punjāb is of abiding value. For new entrants in this field, he has been guide, friend and philosopher.

His association with this University goes back to 1963—which was barely an year after it was chartered. He was the founder-Director of our Department of Punjāb Historical Studies, and our biannual journal *Panjāb Past and Present* of which he still continues to be the editor and our annual Punjāb History Conference owe their origin to his constructive vision. For the last many years he has been a life-Fellow of the University and in this way, I am glad to say, his mature and scholarly advice has been available to us continuously.

This volume consists of learned essays dealing with various aspects of Punjāb history. This is the field in which Dr Gandā Singh specializes and in which his work will be permanently remembered. Besides a biographical introduction, all other essays are of a scholarly nature and they cover a wide spectrum of Punjāb history. They do not, however, attempt a linear presentation of it, though they do capture the style and emphasis of current historical writing on the Punjāb. The volume is a token of our appreciation and gratitude for Dr Gandā Singh. It will, I hope, simultaneously attract wide scholarly attention. It was meant to be not a book of congratulations or panegyric, but of critical academic research. We knew this would be more acceptable to Dr Gandā Singh than mere praise, though praise in this case was more than richly deserved.

I deeply appreciate the opportunity I have had of offering tribute to Dr Gandā Singh. For him we all have genuine respect for his scholarship and for his many great human qualities.

Punjābī University  
Patialā  
June 16, 1976

INDERJIT KAUR SANDHU  
Vice-Chancellor



## INTRODUCTORY

### I

This anthology of essays pays homage to Dr Gandā Singh, the much revered and distinguished Punjāb historian. It celebrates a fact widely acknowledged—the fact of Dr Gandā Singh being a vital and pervasive influence in historical scholarship in the Punjāb. By his persistent and critically important work he has acquired a unique prestige in the world of learning. Throughout his life he has been motivated by one single passion, by one sole purpose of exploring materials pertinent to Punjāb history. Beginning with no advantage other than his own intelligence and determination, he has covered decades of productive research of high quality and finesse. Over the years, his work has been dearer to him than anything else. He has allowed nothing to lure him away from it. Nor has he succumbed to any difficulties or trials of which he has seen many in his life. He has remained indifferent to fame and prospects of material advancement and shunned the limelight. There is a touch of nobility about the selfless and studious way he has pursued the calling of his choosing and achieved a complete identity with it. As one thinks of Punjāb history, one inevitably thinks of Dr Gandā Singh. The two are inseparable. There are other eminent names in this area, but none commands greater respect—and affection—than Dr Gandā Singh's.

Dr Gandā Singh's has been a major role in the evolution of Punjāb studies in India and abroad. His long and distinguished career as a teacher fostered generations of new scholars, while his own work—encompassing dozens of books in English and Punjābī—has set high standards in terms of academic honesty and discriminating use of source materials. In a profession susceptible oftentimes to factions and fashionable or profitable trends of interpretation, Dr Gandā Singh has stubbornly proclaimed that only honest pursuit of historical truth, of true scholarship, ultimately reveals the character and worth of a scholar. Such commitment, attested to by Dr Gandā Singh's own publications and by his unremitting industry and forthrightness, stands as a model for other scholars. These, however, are not the limits of Dr Gandā Singh's contributions to historical research. He has led in preparing biblio-

ographies and protecting rare sources, two key elements for the future of research on the Punjāb.

## II

Dr Gandā Singh was born on November 15, 1900, at Hariānā, an ancient town in Hoshiārpur district of the Punjāb. He started his schooling in the village mosque and then joined the local Government Middle School. After some time he transferred himself to the D.A.V. Middle School, eventually taking his matriculation from Government High School, Hoshiārpur.

The inter-religious polemic which raged in the Punjāb in the early part of this century, stirred young Gandā Singh's curiosity. He turned to reading Sikh literature. The stories of Sikh heroes of the eighteenth century and their brave deeds and sacrifices made a deep impression on his imagination. This was the origin of his interest in Sikh lore. The liberating impulse generated by the Singh Sabhā, the Sikh renaissance movement, gave a critical bias to his study of Sikh history. A deeply embedded streak of adventure, tough physique and strong, indomitable character were the other constituents of the equipment of the future historian of the Punjāb.

Dr Gandā Singh interrupted his studies at Forman Christian College, Lāhore, to join the Indian army in the Third Afghan War. He served in the Supply and Transport Corps Base Depot at Rāwalpindī in 1919, and then in the Divisional Supplies at Peshāwar. In 1920-21, he was with the Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force, first in the Indian Base Depot at Makīnā (Basrā) and later at the Base Supply Depot, Mārgil (Basrā). In 1921, he joined the Royal Army Pay Corps, British Army, Basrā.

In Mesopotamia he had his thigh torn with a bullet shot. Through an erroneous marking, the letter which arrived back in his village home—Pur Hīrān, in Hoshiārpur district—showed him as "dead." Recovering from his wounds, he came to his village a few months later. The hour was late and his knocking at the door of his house did not sound to the inmates as an earthly phenomenon. He was not let in. Spreading out his rug on the bullock-cart in the *havelī*, he slept out the night as soundly as he would have done in the most comfortable of beds.

He went back to Mesopotamia and, then, to Iran. In the latter country, where he spent nine years (1921-30) with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, he came in touch with Sir Arnold T. Wilson, then engaged on his *Biblio-*

*graphy of Persia*. Sir Arnold encouraged his literary interests and introduced him to English journals and societies devoted to oriental studies. Dr Gandā Singh reviewed for some of these books on Indian themes.

In Iran, he started building up his private library, which, today, is perhaps the largest collection under a single roof of material on the history of the Sikhs. He purchased books from all parts of the world and undertook tours of England and other European countries where he visited museums and bookstores.

He published his first book, *My First Thirty Days in Mesopotamia*, which was in English, while he was in Iran. His next two books, *Inki-shāf-i-Haqīqat* and *Sikkhī Parchār* were in Urdū and Punjābī, respectively. The urge to take up historical research in a more systematic manner brought him back to India in 1930. His object was to collaborate with Karam Singh who had done valuable original work in the line and who, by his impassioned writings, had aroused considerable interest in the study and investigation of Sikh history. But before Dr Gandā Singh could meet him, the latter had died. Dr Gandā Singh settled down in Lāhore and joined the *Phulwārī*, a journal devoted to Punjābī letters and history.

But he soon moved to Amritsar where he was offered a teaching and research appointment by the Khālsā College. The college had just opened a department of research in Sikh history which was placed in his charge. This was the beginning of a most prolific period of his career. Starting from nothing, he built the research department of the Khālsā College into a leading institution of its kind in the country. He equipped it with the rarest books and manuscripts. His summer holidays every year he spent travelling in the country collecting for his college material bearing on the history of the Punjāb. Copies of many rare and valuable Persian manuscripts from different collections in India transcribed in elegant calligraphy by his faithful amanuensis, Maulavī Faiz-ul-Haq, kept pouring into the Research Library of the Khālsā College.

His first major work was a biography, in English, of Bandā Singh Bahādur. It was an example of meticulous historical composition marked by accuracy of detail and authenticity of evidence based on original and contemporary sources of information. The book proved a signal success and instantly introduced the author to scholarly notice. A few more biographies, equally well documented, followed. Two of these, *Mahārājā Kaurā Mall* and *Shām Singh Attāriwālā*, were in Punjābī; *Ahmad Shāh Durrānī*, a doctoral thesis, was in English. While at the Khālsā College,

he took his Master's degree in History, topping the year in the first grade, from Muslim University, Aligarh (1944).<sup>7</sup> In 1954, he received his Ph.D. at Panjāb University, Chandīgarh.

After eighteen long years at the Khālsā College full of hard, unflagging labour and dramatic achievement, he came to Patiālā and joined appointment in Patiālā and East Punjāb States Union as Director of Archives. He stayed in this post until his retirement in 1956. During this time, he did not allow his official responsibilities to impinge on his scholarly pursuit. He edited volumes of government records and published numerous learned papers and books. A notable work was *Private Correspondence Relating to the Anglo-Sikh Wars* (1955). In this book was collected a voluminous mass of letters written by English army and political officers dealing with events preparatory to the annexation of Sikh dominions. In light of the evidence thus assembled, the story of the occupation of the Punjāb stood stripped of the muddle which had till then surrounded it and of the glib simplifications of the writers of history textbooks. To this correspondence Dr Gandā Singh added a long introduction which revealed the range of his historical erudition and his power of cogent reasoning. As Director of Archives at Patiālā, he helped salvage from the Punjāb princely states, then under abrogation, a vast amount of historical material and organized it into a large collection of records, manuscripts and books.

He acted as Director of Archives and Curator of Museum at Patiālā, from February 14, 1950, to March 2, 1956. From 1950 to 1953, he simultaneously held charge, as Director, of the Punjābī Department of Patiālā and East Punjāb States Union. A permanent monument of his association with PEPSU Government was the Central Public Library at Patiālā which is of his creation. Another important monument is the Khālsā College of which he became the founder-Principal after his retirement.

Dr Gandā Singh remained in Khālsā College, Patiālā, from June 1, 1960, to September 15, 1963. The connection broke only when the newly established Punjābī University invited him to organize for it a department of Punjāb historical studies. This meant the beginning of another spell of sustained, creative work. He charted a set-up which became a dynamic centre for research in Punjāb history. *De novo* started the quest for bibliographical and manuscript materials. Publication of primary sources on the history of the Punjāb was sponsored. Work was started on a comprehensive eight-volume history of the Punjāb modelled

on the Cambridge History. Another project undertaken was a four-volume series of documents on Punjāb's part in the national struggle for freedom. In 1965, Dr Gandā Singh founded the Punjāb History Conference, and published in the following year his by now prestigious *A Bibliography of the Panjāb*. He headed the department from September 16, 1963, to September 15, 1966. Upon his retirement, the Punjābī University conferred upon him a fellowship for life.

Among learned bodies, he has been a life-member of the Indian History Congress since 1938, and a life-member of the Asiatic Society, formerly Asiatic Society of Bengāl. He has also been a life-member of Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland since 1949, and a life-member of Bhārat Itihās Samshodhan Mandal, Poonā, since 1964. He was a corresponding member of the Indian Historical Records Commission, Government of India from 1938-49, and a member of the Commission from 1950-56. He was secretary of the Sikh Historical Society, Lāhore, in 1931 as well as secretary of the Sikh Tract Society, Lāhore.

He was president of the medieval India session of the Indian History Congress at Rānchī in 1964. He was president of the medieval session of the Punjāb History Conference at Punjābī University, Patīālā, in 1968, and president of the Institute of the Historical Studies, Calcuttā, for its 12th annual session in Shillong in 1974. He presided the Indian History Congress for its 35th session at Jādavpur, Calcuttā, in 1974. In 1975, he presided the 13th annual session of the Institute of Historical Studies at Panajī, Goā.

Marks of honour have been numerous. In 1963, the Punjāb Government invested him with the State Award for Literature for his services to the cause of Punjābī letters. In 1964, Alīgarh Muslim University awarded him the degree of D. Litt. (*Honoris Causa*). On March 28, 1964, the Shiromanī Gurdwārā Parbandhak Committee honoured him for his monumental work on Sikh history. He was similarly acclaimed by the Sikh Educational Conference at its 52nd annual session at Kānpur, October 25-27, 1974.

### III

Today, at 76, Dr Gandā Singh lives in retirement surrounded by his books and his research. He has a singularly healthy use of his faculties and continues to carry out his historian's errand with a deep sense of personal commitment and assurance behind which lies a lifetime's devot-

ed and enduring work. Books which carry his name are numerous and represent learning and judgement of the highest order in their respective areas. Some of them are pioneering works and, taken together, they have enhanced our understanding of the history of the Punjāb. On several issues, he has brought new perspectives. He has challenged old, lethargic viewpoints and has always been willing to take issue on any point which he thought did not stand the scrutiny of scientific evidence. On such issues he has written undauntedly and convincingly. It is a tribute to his sense of veracity and judgement that he has not yet been faulted or contradicted on any of these.

Critical discrimination is a characteristic of Dr Gandā Singh's intellectual discipline. With this he combines an extraordinary capacity for marshalling historical facts and a conscientious regard for truth. His patience and industry are prodigious and his archival sense immaculate. To Punjāb historical studies his contribution is of permanent value. In some areas, his work breaks new ground. Several of his published books are acknowledged as the most authoritative on the subjects they deal with. On certain periods of the history of the Punjāb, such as the eighteenth century and part of the nineteenth, he should be the most knowledgeable of scholars. These he has documented with minute, painstaking care. Another criterion by which Dr Gandā Singh's achievement will be judged by the present and the coming generations is the spadework he has done—the amount of new material he has unearthed and brought to light, and the bibliographies he has compiled.

No one ever carried his learning more lightly. In spite of the magisterial authority he enjoys in his field of learning, Dr Gandā Singh is a modest, generous man. He is warm in affection and always ready to help. Vast numbers of young scholars have benefited from his advice and from his very magnificent private collection of books and manuscripts. There could not be a single doctoral thesis written in recent years on Punjāb history in India or abroad which was completed without reference to him or his collection.

He lives simply with the fewest needs and *rishi*-like shuns social allurements. He maintains a spartan schedule of reading and writing. He is a great lover of books. Catalogues of used and new books come to his desk from all over the world. He reads the books he buys. In his vast collection practically each of the volumes is read by him. There is hardly a book which is not heavily, but tidily, pencil-marked and initialled by him at the end. For him this book-lined existence is not a luxury, but a hard



penance. He labours long hours at his work and has sought no other compensation except the satisfaction of a perspiring day's stint at his desk. By his personal example of dedication and industry, by his own scrupulous studies and by his unhesitant helpfulness, he exercises an immense influence in the world of historical learning. Through the avenue of his journal *Panjāb Past and Present* which carries a combination of fresh scholarly articles and carefully edited primary material or articles inaccessible to students of the region, he provides facilities for easy communication among those interested in Punjāb history.

Apart from his work, Dr Gandā Singh's personality exacts both admiration and reverence. His spirit of dedication and self-effacement, and his deep humility, truthfulness and courage are endearing traits. A man of strict rectitude himself, he is always magnanimous in judging others. The bitterest experience does not sour his goodwill. His generosity inspires devotion and friendship.

A crisis brings out his native love of adventure. He would automatically assume a position of command in such a situation and spare himself no risk or hazard in performing whatever duty he might be called upon to undertake. An unusual amalgam of scholar and man of action, Dr Gandā Singh has achieved a remarkable balance between his natural enthusiasms and powers of mental detachment. This gives him his scholarly poise, without denuding him of his human qualities.

#### IV

A bulk of these essays has been picked from the proceedings of the Punjāb History Conference, Punjābī University, Patiālā, and the Punjāb Studies Conference of the United States. Both owe debt and allegiance to Dr Gandā Singh. He started the Punjāb History Conference, while those behind Punjāb Studies Conference have received inspiration from him and have in a variety of ways depended on him for help. A few of the essays included in the volume have come by invitation. Both Punjāb and American conferences provide opportunities to scholars interested in Punjāb history and life to share their expertise. Through them Punjāb studies have gained new impetus. They have broadened their range of interest.

#### V

The emergence of systematic study of the Punjāb goes back to the mid

years of the last century. That was the time when the Punjāb became part of British dominions. Much of the source material for such an investigation had already been developing during the centuries prior to the annexation in 1849. The vitality of the Sikh faith produced many biographies, chronologies, and collections of religious works, examples of religious expression also found among Muslim and Sūfī intellectuals. At the same time, there appeared the myths, folk tales and romances so popular in modern Punjābī literature. Mahārājā Ranjīt Singh's efforts to unite the region politically in turn generated fresh research material, primarily chronicles and documents on religious endowments, local history and land revenue. An increasingly large universe of documentation on the culture, religion and political experience of Punjābīs combined with the results of the ideas and institutions accompanying the British to provide a natural base for those who came to view the region as a focus for study.

The new administrative structure tied together the region for the first time. The resulting Punjāb was the largest geographical area ever encompassed under this name within political boundaries—Punjāb proper, the Northwest Frontier districts, Delhī and Haryānā. Roads, canals, postal network, railways and an expansive bureaucracy reinforced the image of Punjāb as a unit, both on the map and in the minds of officials and Punjābīs.

Besides shaping boundaries and reinforcing the identity or image of the region, British administration fostered both a vast quantity of new source material and a mechanism for registering and preserving those documents. Colonial rule ultimately rested on the bureaucracy's ability to communicate and to secure accurate information about what Indians were thinking and doing. On the one hand, this necessitated the development and preservation of administrative records. The resulting archives and sets of serial publications (surveyed in N. Gerald Barrier, *Punjāb History in Printed British Documents*, and C.P.K. Fazal, *A Guide to Punjāb Government Reports and Statistics*) were essential for continuity of decision-making and for communication among bureaucrats. Today, they are useful guides to government, politics and society. On the other hand, British attempts to maintain contact with Indian opinion led to the evolution of copyright arrangements and concomitant mechanisms designed to inspect and at times to control Indian writings. The 1867 Registration and Copyright Act required Punjāb publishers to provide the Government with copies of all newspapers and monographs. These

publications were listed in quarterly guides, which remain the single best bibliographic source on Punjāb non-official literature. In addition, the Punjāb Government placed copies of copyright material in local libraries (such as the Panjāb University Library or the Panjāb Public Library) and regularly despatched books to the British Museum and the India Office Library. This systematic collection ensured the survival of the bulk of regional documentation.

Another factor which contributed to Punjāb self-awareness and interest in the region involved the transplantation of western institutions. The British brought to the province an educational system that inculcated western subject matter and supplied fresh models for organization, literary efforts, historiography and ideological debate. The intellectual challenges inherent in the new *milieu* soon led western-educated Punjābīs to re-examine their traditions and civilization. A variety of groups and associations grew up reflecting the numerous and often divergent patterns within society—secular reform clubs, religious associations such as the Ārya Samāj, Muslim Anjumans, and Singh Sabhās, and caste associations. These new bodies frequently sponsored newspapers and manufacture of books and tracts. This literature had the dual goal of communicating among like-minded Punjābīs and explaining (or defending) a particular point of view. A thorough examination of the ensuing trends, organizations and literature is found in critical essays collected and edited by Eric Gustafson and Kenneth Jones, *Sources on Punjāb History* (Manohar, 1975).

With the exception of a few notable works, such as Syad Muhammad Latif's histories of Punjāb and Lāhore, most of the resulting publications dealt with specific concerns or very specialized aspects of Punjāb society. Each religious community or association reinterpreted its past and it printed editions of classical literature. Traditional or modern religious leaders received biographic treatment, as did the martyrs found within the heritage of a particular community. Caste organizations similarly began to explore social origins and often wrote either reform or historical works. Although the concerns thus tended to be polemic, limited and not pertaining directly to overall study of the Punjāb, the intellectual atmosphere in the region had, by the end of the century, developed sufficiently to provide abundant new literary resources and the beginnings of scholarly traditions that were to bear fruit in subsequent generations.

The development of British scholarship constituted a final dimension of nascent Punjāb studies prior to 1900. British concern with the Punjāb

as an object of study and writing grew out of a mixture of motives and goals. For example, the three sets of official documents that shed the most light on Punjāb developments—gazetteers, censuses and settlement reports—were produced in part because of the need of the ruler to have accurate information on the ruled, but also because of active British participation and interest in the society in which they found themselves. The best of early British works on the Punjāb reflected a scholarly-cum-antiquarian tradition. This same tradition also stimulated a variety of individual or joint projects. Examples of the former include S.S. Thorburn's essays on debt, the frontier, and the nature of British rule, Denzil Ibbetson's classic study on Punjāb tribes and castes, the three-volume reference set on Punjāb society and traditions by H.A. Rose, Lepel Griffin's histories of chiefs and leading families, and studies of Punjāb folk literature by Captain R.C. Temple. Among cooperative projects reflecting a commitment to unearthing and publicizing information on the Punjāb, two especially stand out—the district guides to Punjāb customary law and the journal *Punjāb* (later *North India*) *Notes and Queries*.

During the first decade of this century, two streams of intellectual activity aided the development of more formalized study on the Punjāb. First, the earlier tendency for Punjābīs to focus on tradition and contemporary problems of specific communities began to broaden and to assume a more scholarly character. Among the Sikhs, for example, scholars such as Kāhn Singh of Nābhā produced histories, glossaries and critical studies. The trend related directly to another pattern, the spread of formalized research associated with educational institutions and societies. The Panjāb University and affiliated colleges provided impetus for innumerable theses on regional economics, history, geography and literature. The University also brought together foreign and Indian scholars who infused generations of students with modern methodology and techniques for handling sources. The patronage and intellectual fervour soon fostered the Punjāb Historical Society. Drawing on English and Punjābī scholars, the Society held regular meetings and sponsored research publications (monographs as well as a quarterly journal). H.L.O. Garrett, Professor of History at Panjāb University, assisted in training young scholars through internships and supervised study in the local archives. The products included the Punjāb Record Office Monograph series and a widening host of able historians.

Study of the Punjāb has flourished since 1947. The universities take

a special interest and have developed traditions of research and publication on the region. The Panjāb University, Chandīgarh, has Punjāb scholars in a variety of disciplines, as does the Punjābī University at Patialā. Both institutions prepare students for further research, sponsor monographs and bibliographic projects and attempt to collect records and other materials. Significant results include volumes on Punjāb history, politics, and particularly a spectrum of works on Sikhism. A new institution, Gurū Nānak Dev University, has joined the older ones in developing Punjāb and Sikh studies. The Punjāb Agricultural University at Ludhiānā maintains a department of Punjāb History and Culture. The resources of the State, coupled with additional funds from University Grants Commission, Indian Council of Social Science Research and the new Indian Council of Historical Research, have been available to institutionalize and to spread studies on the Punjāb and related matters.

More recently, growing interest in the Punjāb by scholars abroad has produced additional fresh research. A few North American faculty and graduate students began work on Punjāb topics in the early 1960's. By 1965, their number had increased to the point that a formal organization, the Research Committee on Punjāb, was initiated. The Committee helped generate similar associations for other South Asia regions and later affiliated with the South Asia Regional Council (Association for Asian Studies). Between 1966 and 1975, the Research Committee on Punjāb has sponsored five Punjāb studies conferences and thereby drawn together increasing number of Punjāb scholars for cultural and academic interchange. These conferences comprised papers on specific topics which were later published in professional journals, methodological discussions, research proposals, progress reports on long-range research projects and descriptions of significant archival sources. In addition to the books and articles resulting from the sessions, the Research Committee has actively encouraged the preparation of research and bibliographic guides. Three such works are currently available : N. Gerald Barrier, *Punjāb Tracts*; Barrier and Paul Wallace, *The Punjāb Press*; and Kenneth Jones and Eric Gustafson, *Sources on Punjāb History*.

At Patialā, the Punjāb History Conference, called first in 1965 by Dr Gandā Singh himself, has become a substantive medium of Punjāb research. It meets annually under the auspices of the Department of Punjāb Historical Studies, Punjābī University, and brings together scholars interested in the region from all the northern States of India. They give papers on Punjāb history which are debated upon. The Confer-

ence has so far met ten times and maintains the healthy, and rather exceptional, tradition of publishing its annual proceedings punctually.

## VI

Scholars affiliated with the Punjāb Studies Conference of the United States and with Punjāb History Conference of Patiālā have lent their expertise in registering gratitude to Dr Gandā Singh and in acknowledging his contribution to historical research. There are a few others represented here from outside these forums. Many more in the field of Punjāb studies would have wished to similarly associate themselves in offering tribute to Dr Gandā Singh, but the number had to be limited for reasons of the size set for the volume. All the essays here deal with aspects of Punjāb history. Thereby they serve to elucidate Dr Gandā Singh's own work which relates exclusively to this field. The selection does not trace the history of the Punjāb systematically, nor does it cover every facet of Punjāb research. The essays vary widely in theme and, in some cases, in treatment and literary quality as well. Yet there is a kind of unity of perspective. Collectively they reflect the variety and quality of research now being carried on within Punjāb study circles. The volume mirrors not only the past and present condition of Punjāb studies, but also points to the future in terms of new research direction and interpretation. Dr Gandā Singh would have it no other way.

## VII

In conclusion, we must record our gratitude to the Syndicate of the Punjābī University for lending its patronage to this publication and providing the needed funds and facilities. The scheme was worked out when Sardār Kirpāl Singh Nārang was the Vice-Chancellor. He has deep personal esteem for Dr Gandā Singh and responded to the proposal most enthusiastically. His successor, Mrs Inderjīt Kaur Sandhū, equally values Dr Gandā Singh's contribution towards promoting Punjāb history and culture. She gave unstinted support to this project and with characteristic graciousness provided every kind of help to see it accomplished. We render to her our sincerest gratitude..

Two key persons in this undertaking have been Dr W.H. McLeod and Sardār Gurcharan Singh. The former has gravitated from the Punjāb to his native New Zealand and the latter from Patiālā to Faridkot. Yet

their help and goodwill have been available to us throughout. We also have had the advantage of the counsel of Dr M. S. Randhāwā, Vice-Chancellor of Punjāb Agricultural University, Ludhiānā, who is one of the distinguished recipient's friends and admirers. We express our obligation to Dr Faujā Singh, Director of the University's Department of Punjāb Historical Studies. The volume is being published under the aegis of his department and his manifold help has been of crucial importance to us. Acknowledgements must also be made to the authors whose contributions comprise the anthology. Thanks are due to Shri Sardār Singh Bhātīā, Senior Research Fellow on the Encyclopædia of Sikhism, Punjābī University, who heroically shared with us the responsibility of copy-making and checking the proof sheets. In these tasks we received equally handsome help from Dr D. K. Gupta, Head of the Department of Sanskrit at the Punjābī University. Reverend Anand Spencer of Gurū Gobind Singh Department of Religious Studies prepared the index and Sardār Hazārā Singh, Production and Sales Officer of the University, supervised the printing. We are grateful to both. It was with considerable tact that we were able to extract from the recipient the biographical information used in this introductory section. He did not know for what precise purpose we needed it. Maybe, he had his guess on it. But neither of us had the courage to mention that a publication like the present one was in the offing. We do respectfully salute him and humbly inscribe this volume to him.

HARBANS SINGH

N. GERALD BARRIER





## ANCIENT PUNJĀB—A PANORAMIC VIEW\*

BUDDHA PRAKASH

### I

#### THE DAWN OF HISTORY

One of the earliest stone-age cultures of India is attested to have been nourished in the Punjāb. This culture is known as the Sohan culture. Its remains have recently been found over a score of sites including Guler, Bilāspur, Daulatpur, Dehrā and Nālāgarh. The upper four terraces at Guler have yielded stone tools such as unifacial choppers and pebble handaxes. There is, in them, no bifacial handaxe or cleaver so characteristic of Madrian culture. These tools gradually gave place to those made of fine-grained stones like chert, jasper, chalcedony, etc., having a variety of shapes and forms. Then comes the stage of further development leading to the growth of settled life based on pastoral and agrarian economy. At Kili Gul Muhammad, now in Pākistān, we have evidence of the use of chert and bone tools in the domain of agriculture and domestication of cattle. This phase is followed by two succeeding phases marked by the use of pottery and metal, respectively. Corresponding to the third stage is the pre-Harappā-Rupar phase noticed at Kālībangan in Rājasthān. This phase is marked by well-laid houses, chalcedony microliths, copper axes, etc., and a characteristic red ware with designs painted in black-cum-white colour. Almost analogous pottery has been found in the fourth layer at Kot Dāji, Āmrī and Lohrī as well as the pre-defence deposits at Harappā. This red pottery is akin to what Piggott calls "Zhub river in Balūchistān." At Āmrī this ware adjoins another type of pottery having a buff, cream or pink background which Piggott terms "Quettā Culture ware." Analogous to it is the ware of Mundigāk in south Afghānistān as well as that found in the Oxus Valley and Turkmenistān. The zones of these

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\*From the Presidential Address given at the Ancient Punjāb Section of the Punjāb History Conference (1965), Punjābī University, Patialā.

two red and buff wares have their counterparts in the areas of Irān having red and yellow wares. Thus, the fundamental cultural community of the Indo-Irānian regions shaped the historical evolution of their peoples along more or less identical lines. Over this vast area a great complex of chalcolithic cultures evolved from the fourth to the second millennium B. C. Though these cultures exhibit a variety of outlook and technique, ranging from nomadic to sedentary traits, they reveal a progressive trend towards a settled life resulting in the growth of village communities. In course of time, trade and industry, ritual and religion and defence and administration combined to develop villages into larger townships and fortified citadels culminating into the Harappā-Rupar Civilization in the Punjāb. Thus it is wrong to suppose that this civilization was an 'explosive phenomenon,' as Wheeler has done or 'a sudden emergence without prior development,' as Heine-Geldern has stated.

## II

### THE HARAPPĀ-RUPAR CIVILIZATION

Though the Harappā-Rupar Civilization was the outcome of the culture that developed over a vast area in Irān, Afghānistān, Balūchistān and the north-western parts of the Indo-Pākistān subcontinent, it acquired a distinct individuality and developed a unique personality in the Punjāb and Sind and neighbouring regions. The use of burnt brick for building residential houses on an unostentatious and monotonous but utilitarian and regulated pattern, the passion for cleanliness and ablution, almost bordering on obsession, manifest in private wells, baths, privies, pipes, soak pits, sullage jars, covered drains and public baths, the absence of any imposing structure of the likeness of a temple or a ziggurat or a royal tomb or memorials as the dominant centre of civic or social life, the sanctity of bull and *pīpal* as parts of religious belief and artistic orientation, the peculiar figures on seals and the script, the characteristic assemblage of hatched patterns, intersecting circles, scale designs, *pīpal* and peacock features on ceramic decoration, the curve type of knife-blade of bronze, and many other features distinguish this civilization from its Sumerian or Egyptian counterparts and reveal its distinct and integrated personality. In recent years, over a hundred sites of this culture have been found in the vast area from Rupar in East Punjāb to Bhagatrāv in Gujarāt

and up to Ālamgīrpur and Bhatpurā and even the Ghāzīpur and Vārānasī districts in Uttar Pradesh. In the west, it extended along the Makrān coast of Balūchistān and was linked up to the cultures of Ras-al-Qalā'a and other sites in the Bahrein Island on the Persian Gulf, while in the north it had associations with the cultures of Nād-i-Ālī and Mundīgāk in Afghānistān and Namazga Tepe and Kara Tepe in Turkmenistān. In this way, it proved to be the biggest civilization of ancient times.

### III

#### THE RIGVEDA AND THE HARAPPĀ-RUPAR CIVILIZATION

The identity of the Harappā-Rupar people has not yet been clearly established, but, as I have suggested in my book, *The Rigveda and the Indus-Valley Civilization*, they appear to be no other than the people whose thoughts live for ever in the Vedas. Many of the religious motifs of the Harappans can be easily explained with reference to the Vedic data. For example, the three-headed figure wearing a headdress of two horns and a central fan-shaped structure, depicted on a seal,<sup>1</sup> corresponds to the three-headed six-eyed god described in the *Rigveda*.<sup>2</sup> He is Vishvarūpa Tvāshtra or Vishvakarmā Prajāpati embodying the universe consisting of the three forces of mind (*manas*), life (*prāna*) and matter (*vāk*). Sometimes, his symbol is the bull of three aspects, depicted on a Harappan seal<sup>3</sup> and described in the *Rigveda*.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, the seal depicting a deity in a *pīpal* tree, a kneeling personality and a goat with human face on the upper part and seven ministrants, dressed in short kilts and long pigtails, on the lower one seems to bear a pictorial representation of the main ideas of the *asyavā-mīya sūkta*,<sup>5</sup> which refers to the threefold evolution of the creation as Avyaya or Aja (goat), Ashna (hungry) and Ghritaprishta or Kshara or material existence and then its sevenfold course in the form of mind, life, fire, water, wind, sky and earth. On some seals, we find five figures instead of seven recalling the Vedic way of thinking in pentads. As for the *pīpal* tree, it stands for the cosmic tree mentioned in the *Rigveda*.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the Vedic way of thinking in triads, pentads or heptads is fully borne out by Harappan seals. Likewise, the fire-ritual, the *yajna* of the Vedic people, is attested to have been in prevalence among the Harappans by the discovery of what look

like fire-altars with a central stele in the Harappan levels at Kālībangan. On the western mound there, a row of these altars exist on a mud-brick platform near a well and a bath.

In course of time, the dwellers of the Harappan cities, called Panis in the *Rigveda*, were overthrown by the rural people who were tired of their tyranny. In the later phase of the Harappan cities we observe the triumph of rustic coarseness over urban refinement, suggesting that the village folk became dominant over the town people. The location of kilns in the cities, the neglect of public drains, the sparse use of burnt bricks, the use of clay beads, terracotta handles, parallel-side blades of jasper and chalcedony, spheroid or elliptical weights of sandstones or quartzite and the thin-slipped pottery with poorly executed geometric and linear designs bespeak the vulgarization and decadence of this culture-complex. The story of how the village folk overwhelmed the cities is told in the *Rigveda*. But it is a mistake to suppose that the destroyers of the Harappan cities belonged to a different cultural tradition, since the later phase of their civilization, though inferior to the earlier one, does not represent any different pattern. In fact, there is no conclusive evidence to prove that the authors of the *Rigveda* came to the land of the Seven Rivers from any outside country. The whole complex of *Rigvedic* hymns shows them settled in this region from the outset and considering it their sacred land and original home. When, addressing the river Sarasvatī, the poet prays : "Guide us, Sarasvatī, to glorious treasure; refuse us not thy milk, nor spurn us from thee; gladly accept our friendship and obedience; let us not go from thee to distant countries,"<sup>7</sup> he clearly makes it known to us that his forefathers lived in the region through which this river flowed, from ages immemorial. Thus, he reminds us that we are the original residents of the Punjāb rather than immigrants from any foreign land.

#### IV

#### AFTERMATH OF THE HARAPPĀ-RUPAR CIVILIZATION

One of the earliest heroes, who led the rural people of the ancient Punjāb and Sind against their tyrannical rulers living in the cities was Divodāsa, a prince of the Tritsu family of the Bharata clan. His son Sudās was a famous king and conqueror. But his expansionism led to the formation of two confederacies against him; one of these was formed

by the Ajas, Shigrus and Yakshus under the leadership of Bheda on the Yamunā, and the other, by the Indo-Irānian tribes of the Yadu-Turvashas, Bhrigus, Druhyus, Pakthas, Bhalānas, Alinas, Shivas, Vishanins, Pūrus and Anus under the guidance of Shimyu, Purodās, Purukutsa, Kavasha, etc., on the Rāvi. But Sudās was successful against both of them and emerged as the paramount sovereign of the Punjāb. However, Purukutsa's son, Trasadasyu, of the Pūru clan organized a great move against the house of Sudās and eventually supplanted it. Thus the Pūrus became prominent in place of the Bharatas.

The descendants of Trasadasyu, Trikshi, Tryaruna, Traivrishna and Kurushravana ranked as notable kings, but new agglomerations of other Indo-Irānian clans and tribes, known as the Pāñchālas and the Kurus, weakened and finally ousted them. In course of time, the Kurus mixed and merged with the Pūru-Bharatas and lived in association with the Pāñchālas. But, later on, their relations worsened and the movement of other Irānian people put an end to their supremacy. The decline of the Kurus is the theme of the great epic, the *Mahābhārata*.

## V

### THE CULTURE OF THE PUNJĀB IN THE LATER VEDIC PERIOD

The above survey of events, based on the Vedic data, sums up the history of the Punjāb from the end of the Harappā-Rupar culture about 1700 B. C. to the first quarter of the first millennium B. C., when the Kurus declined and fell. In this period there were frequent shiftings of tribes and alignments of peoples of Indo-Irānian origin within the broad stretch of territory embracing Irān, Bactria and the northern regions of the Indo-Pākistān subcontinent. There was no such thing as the invasion and dominance of any foreign people belonging to a race and culture different from that of the inhabitants of this region. This is why, in spite of frequent shiftings of tribes and alignments of people, it continued to be the centre of learning, the seat of culture, the matrix of morals and the home of ideal conduct. The Vedic poet was eloquent in the praise of this land watered by the seven rivers. In the famous 'Hymn of Rivers' (*Nadī-stuti*), contained in the *Rigveda*,<sup>8</sup> the sage, Priyamedha Sindhukshit, who probably hailed from the Indus region, invokes the favour of Shutudrī (Sutlej), Parushnī (Rāvi), Asiknī (Chenāb), Vitastā (Jhelum), Marudvridhā (the joint stream of Chenāb and Rāvi), Ārjikiyā

(upper Indus), Sushomā (Suwān), Susartu, Rasā and Shvetyā (the tributaries of the Indus), Kubhā (Kābul), Gomfatī (Gomal), Krumu (Kurram), etc., among the rivers within his purview, and soars to a high pitch of exultation in his reference to the Sindhu (Indus). According to the *Kaushītakī Brāhmana*,<sup>9</sup> the northern region was the ideal one for the Brāhmins to go for studies. The *Shatapatha Brāhmana*<sup>10</sup> states that Uddālaka Āruṇi went among the people of the northern country in search of knowledge. In the *Chhāndogya Upanishad*<sup>11</sup> this great teacher lays down that the light of learning can be found only in Gāndhāra. In his view, the journey of a man up to Gāndhāra means the ascent of a seeker to spiritual liberation. Below Gāndhāra, the realm of the Kekayas between the Jhelum and the Chenāb was a renowned seat of learning, piety and morals. Its philosopher-king, Ashvapati, could verily claim that his kingdom was free from thieves, misers, drunkards and irreligious, illiterate and immoral people.<sup>12</sup> The character of the people was the strength of the state. To the south of the Kekayas lived the Madras between the Chenāb and the Rāvī with their capital at Shākala. Their kingdom was also a cradle of Vedic culture, and it produced eminent Brāhmin teachers. The high ideals of these people are reflected in the episode of Ashvapati and his daughter Sāvitrī. To the south of Madras was the region of the Ushīnaras that extended up to Ushīnara-giri near Haradvāra. The *Mahābhārata* represents Ushīnara as performing sacrifices on two small streams near the Yamunā.<sup>13</sup> The famous Ushīnara king Shibi is known for his generosity and righteousness in the Jātakas.<sup>14</sup> According to the *Kaushītakī Upanishad*, the famous scholar Gārgya Bālāki, a contemporary of Janaka of Videha, flourished in the Ushīnara country.<sup>15</sup> Thus, it is clear that in the Brāhmana-Upanishad period, up to about 1000 B. C., the people of the Punjāb represented the cream of culture and learning.

## VI

### THE FALL OF THE KURUS AND ITS SOCIO-CULTURAL CONSEQUENCES

Sometime in the first quarter of the first millennium B. C., the Kuru kingdom declined. The *Mahābhārata* ascribes its fall to a fratricidal war between two branches of the ruling family, called the *Kauravas* and the *Pāndavas*. But, in spite of the effort of the author or the editor of the epic to conceal their difference, some stray hints steal out here and there

to establish their fundamental distinctness. The Pāndavas are depicted as a pale-complexioned people practising polyandry and patronizing the custom of *sati*. They represent an alignment of five tribes which are reminiscent of the people who gave the name *Panzis* or *Khamsah*, Arabic word for "five," to the country between Qazwin and Ardalan to the south of the Caspian Sea. Some of the names of the Pāndava heroes appear to be Sanskritized versions of some tribal designations like Yaudheya and Ārjunāyana and Pandoouoi. Hence it is no wonder that in the struggle of the Pāndavas and the Kauravas there is an implicit reference to an invasion of the Kuru kingdom by northern tribes including some Irānīan nomadic elements. In the wake of their invasion many outlandish tribes such as the Jartas, the *Joati* of Ptolemy and the *Jāts* of modern times, the Ābhīras (modern *Ahīrs*), perhaps the *Apiru* or *Ibhri* who played a part in the history of the Middle East and are repeatedly mentioned in the Cuneiform Nuziaan, Hittite and Amarna documents, the Bālhikas or Bactrians, who gave the name *Bālhika* or *Vāhikas* to the people of the whole Punjāb and whose modern descendants are probably the *Bhallas*, *Bahls* and *Behls*, and the many other exotic warrior clans whose strange armours, bows and banners, unfamiliar trappings, vehicles and costumes, ornaments and deportment are noticed in the *Mahābhārata*<sup>16</sup> infiltrated into the Punjāb and brought about a change in its socio-cultural set-up. As a result, the population of this region split up into a large number of tribes and clans earning their livelihood by the profession of arms (*vārtāshastropajīvinah*). They had different types of organizations like *pūga*, *kula*, *vrāta*, *gana*, *shrenī* and *grāma*, mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*. The *pūgas* constituted a primitive form of tribal organization, while the *vrātas* were bands of predatory people who lived by violence and were distinguished by red and black robes like the Red and Black Kāfirs of Hindūkush. A number of *vrātas* formed a *kula*, dominated by the *rājanyavridhdhas*. The *shrenīs* and *ganas*, like those of the *saṁshaptakas*, represented the clans, agglomerations and communities of soldiers living as separate groups, and the *grāmas* comprising *grāmaneyas* were under the leadership of tribal ancestors and their descendants and derived their name from them. They are said to be living along the banks of the Indus.<sup>17</sup> Among these people, the military class was in the ascendant, and its members performed their own religious ceremonies. Hence they were called *rājayājakas* in the *Mahābhārata* and *kshatriyayājakas* by Pānini.<sup>18</sup> Among them caste did not mean anything and a Brāhman could become a barber and *vice versa*.<sup>19</sup> Some of them drank the milk and

ate the flesh.<sup>20</sup> Their consumption of onion and garlic, and wine and rum was an anathema to the orthodox people. Among them some Spartan customs were quite prominent. For instance, among the Kathas, children, when they were two months old, were examined by special officials and only those who were perfect in limbs and features were allowed to be reared and those defective in health and physique were exposed. To ensure this eugenic system, marriage was contracted in consideration of the beauty and health of the bride rather than the prospect of dowry and riches to be obtained from her family. In fact, the form and looks were so important that a ruler was selected on their basis.<sup>21</sup>

## VII

### THE BRĀHMANICAL REACTION TO THE SOCIO-CULTURAL PANMIXIA OF THE PUNJĀB

The aforesaid social system was denounced by the orthodox people, who had by that time shifted to the Gangetic Valley. They called the people of the Punjāb *āratta* (*arāshtraka* or stateless), *cora* (thieves) and *vāhikas* (outsiders). In their eyes, some of the features of their life, such as *ūrnāvīkṛaya* (wool trade), *sīdhupāna* (rum-drinking), *ubhayatodatīvyavahāra* (trade in animals, such as horses, having teeth in the upper and lower jaws), *āyudhīyaka* (living as guilds of mercenary soldiers) and *samudrasamyāna* (sea voyage and riverine traffic), constituted grave defects.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, a visit to their land polluted a person and necessitated an expiatory rite called *punastoma* or *sarvaprishtha ishti*. Even the northern boundary of Āryāvarta was fixed at Sthūnā, probably modern Thānesar,<sup>23</sup> or Adarshana or Vinashana, near modern Sirsā.<sup>24</sup> Some even went further and confined Āryāvarta to the Doāb of the Yamunā and the Gangā.<sup>25</sup> Thus, the Land of the Five Rivers was dismissed as outside the pale of Āryan society and culture. This picture of the Punjāb is, however, distorted and lopsided.

## VIII

### THE POST-MAHĀBHĀRATA PERIOD : FROM PUKKUSĀTI TO CHANDRAGUPTA

During this period also, despite frequent political changes, this region enjoyed a reputation in trade and education. Out of the disturbed conditions of the tribal vortex of the post-*Mahābhārata* period,



the state of Gāndhāra with its twin capitals, Pushkalāvati, modern Pakholī or Chārsaddā in the Peshāwar district, and Takshashilā, modern Taxilā in the Rāwalpindī district, emerged as the paramount power. Its ruler Pukkusāti extended his sway up to the river Rāvī in the east and Multān in the south and threatened to invade the kingdom of Avanti in the heart of northern India. He had diplomatic contacts with the Achaemenian emperor Cyrus the Great in the west and the Magadha monarch Bimbisāra in the east. It was in this period that the fame of Takshashilā as a seat of learning spread throughout the entire Uttarāpatha and attracted high-ranking persons like Prasenajit and Jīvaka from the east. Again, it was during this period that the fame of Shākala or Siālkot for the beauty of its women reached Magadha and attracted men like Pippalī Mānavaka from there.<sup>26</sup> Shortly afterwards, Buddhist preachers also reached the Punjāb. The envoys of the Vajjiputtakas are said to have gone to Aggalapura (Agrohā) and Adambra (Kāngrā Valley and Pathānkot) in search of the venerable Revata on the eve of the council of Vaishālī, 1000 years after the *nirvāna* of the Buddha. Bu-ston reports that Yasas consulted a teacher named Ajita of Srughna near Ambālā in that connection.<sup>27</sup> Obviously, by that time the Punjāb had already begun to figure in the Buddhist affairs.

Darius the Great (522-486 B. C.) annexed Gāndhāra to his empire and included it in its taxation unit No. 7. But, following the death of the next king Xerxes (486-465 B. C.), Gāndhāra and the adjacent regions shook off the yoke of the Achaemenians. In this turmoil, the ancient Pūrus or Pauravas descended from their highland retreats and tried to create an empire in the north-west, with its seat between the Jhelum and the Chenāb. Their energetic and enterprising leader, called Poros by Greek historians and Fur by Arabic and Persian writers, spread apprehension among all neighbouring rulers. Hence the king of Taxilā, called Āmbhi, hugged Alexander as a support; the king of Abhisāra in the north wavered in his loyalty to Poros; his own kinsman, who ruled between the Chenāb and the Rāvī, hobnobbed with Alexander and probably had truck with the Nandas of the Gangetic basin; and in south Punjāb the Kshudrakas and the Mālavas formed a union and armed themselves to the teeth to forestall his invasion. According to consistent Persian traditions, Poros had good relations with Darius III and even tried to help him against Alexander.<sup>28</sup> But the Macedonian conqueror made short shrift of the arrangements of Darius and, overrunning the Achaemenian empire, dashed into Afghānistān and

encountered the stiff resistance of the Kamboja tribes called Aspasians and Assakenoi, known in Indian texts as Āshvāyana and Āshvakāyana.<sup>29</sup> However, the king of Taxilā befriended him for fear of Poros. Crossing the Jhelum in the rainy season of 327 B. C., he met the armies of Poros in battle array in the Karri plain. Greek writers have given conflicting accounts of the end of the battle of Jhelum, and Perso-Arabic and Ethiopian traditions relate that Alexander's position became shaky. One thing, however, is certain that the verdict of this battle was not as clearly in favour of Alexander as that of Gaugamela and Arbela. The overall result of it was that Poros became a friend of Alexander and his kingdom extended over a wider region. But even with his support the Macedonians could not advance beyond the river Beās and had to beat retreat through south Punjāb, Sind and Balūchistān, which strained their nerves to the breaking point. No sooner had Alexander turned his back on the Punjāb than a powerful movement of unity and liberation swept through the Punjāb under the guidance of the most illustrious product of this region, the teacher-statesman Chānakya or Kautilya of Takshashilā, and eventually led to the foundation of the mighty Maurya empire. Thus it is significant that the beginnings of the first unified state of India were made in the land of the Five Rivers.

Unity is the greatest asset of nations. Its miracle was seen only after a couple of decades. While Alexander could willy-nilly advance up to the river Beās in 327-326 B. C., his successors Seleucos had to retire from the frontier of the subcontinent ceding the provinces of Aria (Herāt), Arachosia (Kandāhār), Paropamisdae (Kābul Valley) and Godrosia (Balūchistān) to the Indian monarch Chandragupta in 305 B.C. In the *Mahābhārata*<sup>30</sup> and in the inscriptions of Ashoka these regions are said to be peopled by the Yonas, Kambojas and Gāndhāras. Recently, the discovery of a bilingual inscription of Ashoka in Greek and Aramaic near Kandāhār and another in Greek only near that place has confirmed the validity of the tradition of Maurya rule in this region. Likewise, the discovery of twelve shreds of northern black polished ware at Chārsaddā, one at Udegrām in the Swāt Valley and twenty at Taxilā, has established the prevalence of the Maurya rule in that region, as shown by Wheeler. Besides the aforesaid northern territories, Ashoka enumerates Nābhaka and Nābhapankti, standing for Nābhā and Patiālā, in his epigraphs. Thus, it is clear that the hold of the Mauryas over the Punjāb and the north-west was firm and secure.

## IX

## UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE MAURYAS

In the second half of the first millennium B. C., the Punjāb saw a rapid growth of population and an increase in the number of cities. Strabo states that between the Jhelum and the Beās there were as many as 500 cities. Pānini gives the names of about 750 towns, some of which were tribal-cum-territorial units called *janapadas*. About the cities in the kingdom of the Glaukanikoi between the upper courses of the Jhelum, the Chenāb and the Rāvi, Arrian states that the smallest of them contained not fewer than 5000 inhabitants, while many contained upwards of 10,000.<sup>31</sup> This trend towards urbanization produced a consciousness of civic rights. Hence, while the people of the Punjāb helped in the creation of the Maurya empire and accepted its centralized and bureaucratic administration, they did not tolerate the high-handed attitude of the Maurya officials. This is why they thrice rose in revolt against Maurya regime, and when the royal princes, Ashoka, Sushīma and Kunāla, went to their metropolis, Takshashilā, to pacify them, they informed them that they had risen not against the king but against the officials who insulted them.<sup>32</sup> These princes naturally respected their sentiments.

The death of Ashoka in 236 B. C. gave a signal to revolts and disturbances. His successor in Kashmīra conquered the region up to Kānyakubja.<sup>33</sup> In Gāndhāra and the north-west, Virasena and Subhagasena became independent. There were irruptions and invasions of the foreigners (*mlechchhas*), who probably represented the Greeks of Bactria. Yet these rulers succeeded in repelling them and keeping their realms intact. To this period belong the coins bearing the legend *negama panchanekama* and *hiranasama* discovered at Takshashilā and many other types of uninscribed copper coins, showing the progress of economic life.

## X

## FROM THE SHUNGAS TO THE KUSHĀNAS

In 184 B. C., the Brāhman general Pushyamitra assassinated the last Maurya monarch Brihadratha and established the Shunga empire

at Pātaliputra. He was conscious of the menace of the foreigners hovering on the north-western frontiers of the Punjāb. Hence, in order to strengthen his hold over this region, he marched on Shākala (Siālkot) and one of his grandsons advanced on to the Indus and inflicted a defeat on the Yavanas or the Greeks.<sup>34</sup> To commemorate this victory, he performed the horse-sacrifice. Towards the end of his reign, the situation on the frontiers again worsened, and he himself led an expedition beyond the Indus plunging into modern Bīrkot and Udeygrām in the Manglāwār region. The coins of the Indo-Greeks, Parthians and Scythians have been found in abundance in this region. According to tradition, the Buddhist ruler of this region invited for his assistance one Krimisha whom P.C. Bāgchī has identified with the Graeco-Bactrian king Demetrius. In some encounter Pushyamitra was crushed under some rock and killed about 150 B. C. Soon a dismemberment of the Shunga empire followed, and Demetrius, probably Demetrius II Aniketes, plunged into the Punjāb, overran Mādhyamika, which stands for the territory called Māñjhā or the upper part of Bārī Doāb, advanced towards Mathurā and Sāketa and encamped outside the walls of Pātali-putra. But a revolt in his own realm, led by Eucratides, forced him to retrace his steps and retire to the north-west to be entrapped and killed by his antagonist. During these disturbances, the Greek rulers Pantaleon and Agathocles issued their coins in the Punjāb, and Eucratides ruled to the south of the Hindūkush. But Eucratides's successors, Plato and Heliocles I, held their sway in Bactria to the north of the Hindūkush. About 145 B. C., the kingdom of the Punjāb came into the hands of Menander who extended his rule to the east of the Rāvī and raided up to the Gangetic Valley. But his empire, extending from the Swāt Valley up to the Gangetic basin, was a congeries of semi-independent principalities, presided over by Antimachus II, Polyxenus, Epander, etc. Trouble in the north also invited him there and cost him his life about 129-128 B. C. After his death, his queen Agathokleia assumed the reins of the government as the regent of his son, Strato. After Strato his grandson Strato II Philopater came to the throne, but Heliocles I or II and Archebius, being displaced from Bactria, pounced upon his kingdom, while Zoilus, Lycias and Theophilus established themselves in the Swāt Valley and Arachosia. Out of this anarchy Antialkides emerged triumphant in west Punjāb, and Apollodotus, a relative of Strato, became powerful in the Rāvī region. The former had Vaishnava leanings and the latter had a Buddhist background. The latter seems to have eventually succeeded in

invading and overpowering west Punjāb.

In this chaos the Shaka chief Maues (*cir.* 48-33 B. C.) occupied the Swāt Valley and the Hazārā country, took possession of Takshashilā and the Punjāb and swept up to Mathurā in the Gangetic Valley. One of his satraps, Liaka Kusulaka, and his son, Patika Kusulaka, had their seat at Chukhsā, modern Chach to the west of Takshashilā; another Damijada ruled in the Hazārā region in Abhisāra; a third, Kharacasta, administered east Punjāb; and a fourth, Rājūvala, was stationed at Mathurā. We also know the names of several other Shaka satraps like Miyika, Khardda, Krenina and Hagana and Hagamasa. All these people were known as Murundas. They were supplanted in the Punjāb by the Parthians or Pahlavas, who also had Shaka blood in their veins. About the middle of the first century B. C., the Parthian chief Vonones with the assistance of the Shaka chiefs Spalahora and his son Spalagadama ruled over south Afghānistān, supplanting Greek rule in the Helmund Valley, Ghaznī and Kandāhār. He was followed by Spalyris and Spalirises belonging probably to the family of Spalahora and Spalagadama. Then came Azes I, Azilises and Azes II in the last quarter of the first century B. C., but then Gondophares descended from Drangiānā and conquered the Punjāb. In alliance with the Kushāna prince Kujūla Kadphises he liquidated the Greeks, who had tried to raise their head under Hermaeus. But little did he realize that his ally would put an end to the rule of his successors. After his death his nephew, Abdagases, succeeded him, but one Sasan challenged him and seized Gāndhāra. Abdagases and Sasan were followed by Sapadances and Shatavastra, while Takshashilā was ruled by Athama. Then Kujūla Kadphises conquered the Kābul Valley and Ki-pin or the regions to the south of the Hindūkush including Gāndhāra and parts of Kashmīra and ushered in the period of Kushāna rule. His successor, Wima Kadphises, supplanted the resurgent Pahlava prince Pakores, and consolidated his hold over the Punjāb. The organization and expansion of the Kushāna empire was, however, the work of the next ruler Kanishka. He ruled over a vast region extending from Khwarizm and the Tarīm basin to the Deccan in the south and Magadha in the east. His successor, Vāsishka, Huvishka and Vāsudeva I, maintained their hold over the Punjāb, but the rise of the native powers in the east and the Sassanids in the west created a host of difficulties for them. The later Kushāna kings Vāsudeva II, Kanishka II and Vāsudeva III, and their feudatories, the Shakas, the Shīladas and Gadaharas, in the Punjāb had to bear the severe blasts of the native people.

## XI

## SOCIO-CULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE FOREIGN RULE

The period of the rule of the Yavanas, Murundas, Pahlavas and the Kushānas in the Punjāb from the later part of the second century B. C. to the third century A. D. is a kaleidoscope of successions, usurpations, rebellions and invasions whose chronology is very much complicated and confused. But, in this period, the Punjāb went through the process of significant socio-cultural change. Many foreign people settled here and mixed and merged with the local population. They adopted the indigenous religion, language and culture and also contributed their own features to them. As a result, there was a new development in popular beliefs, ideas and outlook. Zeus Ombrios or Jupiter Piuivius was identified with Indra and associated with the elephant deity of Kāpishī. Likewise, the concept of Artemis mixed with that of Anahita or Nanaia and the cult of Mithra coalesced with that of Helios or Apollo and the Indian Sūrya. According to the *Bhavishyapurāna*, Sāmba invited the Maga Brāhmins to officiate as priests in the sun temple built by him on the Chandrabhāgā, the Chenāb. The Prākrit text *Āṅgavijjā*<sup>35</sup> refers to the worship of the Graeco-Roman goddesses Pallas (Apala), Irene (Iriani), Artemis (Miskaessi) and Selene (Salimalini) and the Irānian goddess Anahita (Anadita). The eight Magas of the Irānian religion became the eight Buddhas in the art of Bamiyān. The cities of Nikaia and Boukephala on the Jhelum were renamed by the Buddhists as Ādirājya and Bhadrāshva and brought into relation with the biography of the legendary king Mahasmata.<sup>36</sup> The corporeal relics of the Buddha became more than commemorative pieces and were regarded as living and breathing beings in the presence of which one could propitiate one's ancestors with offerings of food and drink.<sup>37</sup> The cult of *pūjā* with the object of prolonging life and increasing energy (*āyurbalavriiddhi*), maintenance of health (*ārogya*), preservation of well-being (*hitasukha*) and protection of children from epidemics became the dominant feature of the Buddhist religion.<sup>38</sup> The saying of prayer was joined to the circumambulation (*pradakshinā*). The Buddha began to be represented in figures and images particularly during the reign of Archebius in Takshashilā between 100 B. C. and 87 B.C. The school of Sarvāstivāda flourished, the *Milindapanho* in its original form being a text of this school in north-western Prākrit. Together with the Mahāsāmgika school, it was patronized by the Shaka

satraps of Chukhsā, namely Laika, Patika, Arta and Manigula, and those of Mathurā, namely Rājūvula and Shodāsa. The psalm (*stotra*), epistle (*lekha*) and drama (*nātaka*) emerged as new forms of literary expression in the service of religion. All these developments eventually culminated in the great religion of Mahāyāna which, in the Kushāna period, set out to conquer the vast continental expanses of Asia. The support and patronage extended by the Kushāna rulers to this religion is too well known to require a detailed treatment here.

Contacts between the Punjāb and other parts of the world in this period resulted in the exchange of many new ideas and objects. A large number of Irānian plants, vegetables and fruits, like pistachio (*akshota*), walnut (*pārasī*), pomegranate (*dādima*), coriander (*kustumburu*), shallot (*mleccha-kanda*), garlic (*lashuna*), onion (*palāndu*), asafoetida (*hingū*), oakgalls (*mājūphala*), cummin (*jīrā*), almond (*vātāma*), fig (*anjīra*), watermelon (*tarambujā*), and carrot (*yavana*), entered the dietary of the people. Likewise, Chinese fruits, like peach (*chīnānī*) and apricot (*chīnarājaputra*), were introduced into this region by the Chinese hostages in the court of Kanishka whose winter residence was fixed at Chine or Chīnapati, eleven miles from Amritsar on the road to Pasrūr and Siāl-kot. Besides plants and fruits, the dress of coat (*kurtau*; *kotavaka* of the *Angavijjā*), trousers (*sukthana*, *santhana* or *svasthāna*; Shaka : *soms-tamni*), belt (*chakras*), and boots (*khpusa kavasi*, *kavasi*) came into vogue among the people. Likewise, the metal ring armour (*kavacha*; Chinese : *sia-cha*), the long sword and pike, the horse-shoe and the stirrup made their mark on the military art.

Many new ideas like those of *devaputra* and *rājādhirāja* entered the domain of political thought. The Sogdian traders, who settled in the Punjāb in good numbers and whose descendants go by the name of *Sūd* and *Sūdgī* in Amritsar, Ludhiānā and Machhīwādā, *Solgī* and *Solkāh* in Multān and *Sulkī* in Shāhpur, established commercial relations among Indian and Central Asiatic merchant-guilds, on which the Sogdian letters discovered from Tunhuang throw some light. To one of these Sogdian families of the Punjāb belonged the Buddhist preacher Seng-hui, who introduced his religion for the first time in south China. Indian traders also had close connections with the western world. The gold *dīnāra* of the pre-Neronian standard was adopted by the Kushānas. Alexandrine die-cutters worked in Kushāna mints and designed their coinage. In fact, as Robert Göbl holds, one of the motives of the invasion of the Punjāb by the Kushānas was their interest in the trade of the Romans and the

Chinese empire with India.

In town-planning and house-building also new ideas made their appearance. The township of Sirkap at Takshashilā, built by the Bactrians and rebuilt by the Scytho-Parthians, was divided into symmetrical sectors by streets cutting each other at right angles. Probably, under Azes a defensive stone-wall, punctuated at regular intervals by rectangular bastions, was added to the old rampart of mud. The new enclosure included the hillock of Hathial and the city became divided into two parts : a high acropolis, where the ruling class lived, and a lower city, in which the bourgeois people carried on their trades. This pattern must have been widespread in north India. In architecture, the self-contained, walled-in and more or less rectangular monastery with cells and verandahs arranged round courtyard and a little *stūpa* in the centre and a common refectory and conference-hall became the order of the day. Some scholars hold that arch was introduced in this age. The Gāndhāra school of art also flowered in this period, reflecting the luxurious and indulgent life of the high class people in that age. In medicine and astronomy also western ideas had an impact on Indian thought. Menander, whose philosophical interests are manifest from the *Milindapanho*, is said to have composed an astronomical treatise from which twelve verses have been quoted by Utpala in his commentary on the works of Varāhamihira. Thus, we observe that in this period the culture of the Punjāb underwent a singular transformation and the mental horizon of her people was immensely enlarged.

## XII

### UNDER THE HEGEMONY OF THE GUPTAS

In the third century A. D., the power of the Kushānas in the Punjāb began to crumble. The resurgence of independent tribes and people in east Punjāb spelt its end. The Paunas on the banks of the Yamunā near Jagādhri, the Yaudheyas in Haryānā and the cis-Sutlej area, the Kunindas between the Sutlej and the Beās, the Mālavas in the region called Mālwā, that is, the cis-Sutlej part of the present-day Punjāb state, the Madras in the Rāvī-Chenāb area, and many other peoples freed east Punjāb from the Kushānas. In the north-west the Sassanid monarchs of Persia, Ardashir I and Shāpur I, exercised relentless pressure on them. Hence



they were sandwiched in west Punjāb. In the fourth century A. D. the Gupta empire engulfed the whole of north India. According to the Allāhābād inscription, Samudragupta received the submission of the independent peoples of east Punjāb and, as the *Manjushrīmūlakalpa* says, advanced in the north-west up to Kashmīra. Hence about the middle of the century, the Kushāna king acknowledged the suzerainty of the Gupta emperor. However, after the death of Samudragupta, the Kushānas again became assertive and pestered the Guptas at the time of Rāmagupta. But the next monarch Chandragupta gave them a crushing blow and even led an expedition up to the Oxus Valley, as the Mehraulī inscription states. The motif of the conquest of Vālhika or Balkh figures prominently in Gupta literature, for instance, in the *Raghuvamsha* of Kālidāsa, the *Chaturbhāni*, the *Matsyapurāna* and the *Mahābhārata*. In the fifth century, a new power, called the Kidāra-Kushānas, rose in the north-west. There is a difference of opinion among scholars about their chronological position, but Pelliot, Robert Göbl, Curiel and Schlumberger and, recently, the Japanese scholars, Enoki and Yamada, have shown that they became prominent in the fifth century. About A. D. 402, they established themselves in Bactria and by A. D. 437 spread their sway up to Gāndhāra and west Punjāb. The advance of another people of Irānian stock, the Hephthalites, called the Hūnas, into Bactria split up the Kidāra-Kushānas into two parts: one ruling in the region of the Caspian Sea and the other in Gāndhāra.<sup>39</sup> This upheaval of peoples in the north-west, involving the Kidāra-Kushānas, the Hephthalite-Hūnas and the Pahlava-Persians, assumed the form of an invasion of the Punjāb and north India in A. D. 356 at the end of the reign of Kumāragupta, but the gallant prince Skandagupta inflicted a crushing defeat on the invaders and drove them away. The Sassanids defeated the Kidāra-Kushānas in the Caspian Sea region about A. D. 468 and the Hephthalite-Hūnas crushed them in Gāndhāra between A. D. 477 and 500. Some Kidāra princes, named Kritavīrya, Shilāditya, Bhāsvān, Kushala, Prakāsha and Sarvayashas, ruled in the Punjāb and issued the coins called *kedāra* in the *Kāshikā*, but they were completely Indianized and their power was very much limited.

Towards the end of the fifth century A. D. the clan of Jaula became powerful among the Hephthalite-Hūnas and their king Toramāna advanced up to the Chenāb, as we learn from the *Kuvalayamālākathā*, and thence pounced on east Punjāb sacking cities and Buddhist establishments like Sanghol in the Ludhiānā district, where his coins.

have been found. In A. D. 510, he pounced upon Mālwa (in Madhya Pradesh) and his son Mihirakula was supreme in north India up to about 530. But the king Yashodharman Vishnuvardhana of Mālwa drove the Hūnas from north India and brought Mihirakula to his feet.<sup>40</sup> Mihirakula's successor Khinkhila *alias* Narendrāditya ruled only on the western side of the Indus. His inscription has been found in Gardez.<sup>41</sup> So far the Punjāb is concerned, it was under Yashodharman Vishnuvardhana and probably his successors from *cir.* A. D. 530 to *cir.* 550. In the latter half of the sixth century the dynasty of the Pushpabhūtis started its rule in east Punjāb with their capital at Thānesar.

The early Guptas were keenly conscious of stepping into the shoes of the Kushānas. This is clear from the fact that the standard-bearer coin of Samudragupta is a copy of a similar type of the Kushānas. Besides, Samudragupta is shown in the northern dress of coat, trousers and boots, which seems to have become a sort of national dress in that period. In the Allāhābād stone pillar inscription due emphasis has been laid on the powers of the Punjāb. Some coins of the Kushāna type have been found with the names of Samudra and Chandra, whereas some Scythian rulers of the west are known to have used the coins of the Gupta type. All this shows that the Guptas had close connections with the Punjāb. From there their influence spread over Sind and Afghānistān, as the evidence of art shows. In Afghānistān it led to the growth of an Indo-Afghān school of art. The clay figures of Fondukistān and Marandjan and the decorative mouldings from Bamiyān bear a deep impress of this art. Likewise, the terracotta figurines, particularly the figures of the Buddha, Kubera, the donors, the *mithunas*, etc., at Mīrpur Khās in Sind and Devnīmori in Gujarāt, show the western extensions of the influence of the Guptas in the sphere of art.

### XIII

#### UNDER THE PUSHPABHŪTIS AND HARSHA

In the latter half of the sixth century A. D., a new element entered the history of the north-west. The western Turks occupied the Kābul Valley. The coins of one of their chiefs, Napki, have been found at Khair Khance near Kābul. At the time of Hiuen Tsang, a Turkish prince ruled in that region. These Turks pushed the Hephthalite-Hūnas southwards in the region of Ghaznī and Ab-i-Istada, which was known as Zābul after

the name of their ruling house *Jaula*. From beyond the Indus these Hūnas continued their raids in the Punjāb. Hence the Pushpabhūtis of Thānesar had to contend with them over a long time. Bāna describes the Pushpabhūti king Prabhākaravardhana as 'a lion to the Hūna deer' (*hūnaharinakesarī*) and a 'bilious plague to the scent-elephant, the lord of Gāndhāra' (*gāndhārādhipagandhadvipopakālah*),<sup>42</sup> showing that he successfully struggled both with the Hūnas of Zābul and the Turkī ruler of Kābul. The menace from the north-west also drove the Pushpabhūtis and the Maukharis of Kanauj into an alliance as a result of which the Maukhari monarch Sharvavarman is shown to be fighting with the Hūnas and defeating them.<sup>43</sup> This policy made north India immune from the Hūna incursions for about half a century. In the beginning of the seventh century A. D., the conquest of Sind by Harsha further tightened his grip on the northern frontiers.

In the first part of the seventh century, the Punjāb was under the sovereignty of Harsha. We get interesting sidelights into her life and culture from the itinerary of the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang. In the spring of A. D. 633, he descended into the Punjāb from Kashmīra. When he was passing through a forest near Shākala or Siālkot, a band of fifty robbers entrapped him and his party, stripped them of all their possessions including the clothes and drove them into the bed of a dried-up pond and tried to truss them up with ropes. Fortunately, he broke away through a gap in the thick growth of creepers and ran full tilt for nearly a mile to save his life. Then he met a Brāhman ploughing his field. On hearing this incident, the Brāhman rushed to the village and blew his conch, on which eighty villagers assembled with arms and dashed towards the robbers. Thereupon, the robbers made off towards the forest and the pilgrim untrussed his companions. The villagers provided them with clothing and other necessaries. Next day, on the borders of the Takka country, in a great mango grove, he met a Brāhman who possessed a good knowledge of the Vedic and Mādhyamika texts and claimed to be seven hundred years old. Unable to entertain the pilgrim and his party in his woodland retreat, he approached a neighbouring town, and three hundred prominent townsmen set out with clothing and provisions to receive the visitors. At Chīnabhukti, modern Chine, Hiuen Tsang met and studied with the prince Vinītaprabha who had become a monk and ranked as an idealist philosopher and an authority on logic and wrote commentaries on Mahāyāna works including the *Trimshikā*. On reaching China, he

introduced the new logic that he read under Viniṭaprabha in his country. Hiuen Tsang's account of Jullundur, Srughna and Thānesar shows that Buddhism coexisted with Hinduism and life in the monasteries was fairly comfortable and intellectual.

#### XIV

##### THE COCKPIT OF THE TRIPARTITE STRUGGLE OF KANAUJ, KASHMĪRA AND THE TURKS

After the death of Harsha in A. D. 647 or 648, there was chaos and confusion in all parts of his empire. The Turkish rulers of Kābul assuming the title of Sahitegin, captured parts of the Punjāb, as their coins with legends in Brāhmī script indicate. Even the region of Thānesar and Kurukshetra broke away from the control of Kanauj. Hence, in the last quarter of that century, Yashovarman, who tried to resuscitate the empire of Kanauj, had to campaign in this region.<sup>44</sup> He also measured swords with the Turkī Tegins, as can be gathered from the title of *pratīatikina*, adopted by his warden of the northern marches, called *udīcipati* in the Nālandā inscription. His hold over west Punjāb is established by the discovery of his coins in the Mānikyāla *stūpa*.

Being dislodged from the Punjāb, the Turkī princes, called Shāhis, settled in Kashmīra, founded many Buddhist sanctuaries there, as we learn from the account of the Chinese pilgrim O-u Kong, and received high posts under Lalitāditya Muktāpīda, as can be gathered from the *Rājataranginī*.<sup>45</sup> Lalitāditya had a dispute with Yashovarman over the state of Jullundur. As the Chinese pilgrim Hui Ch'ao states, both of them frequently invaded and annexed this region. But, at that time, a new menace stared the people of north India in the face. It was the Tibetan power which was organized on a strong footing by Srong-btsan-gam-po. Between A. D. 736 and 747, the Tibetans occupied Bāltistān. Hence both Lalitāditya and Yashovarman sought the aid of China to fight with the Tibetans and sent diplomatic missions to the court of the T'ang for that purpose. This menace drove Kashmīra and Kanauj together in spite of their rivalry over Jullundur. But, after A. D. 736, the Turkī Shāhi ministers of Kashmīra, led by one Chankuna, instigated Lalitāditya to invade the Punjāb, capture Jullundur and even conquer Kanauj. Yashovarman was defeated, and Jullundur, Kāngrā, Punch and other territories were annexed by Lalitāditya and conferred on his

attendants. But the pressure of the Tibetans was increasing. They conquered Greater Pulu (Bāltistān) in A. D. 744 and retained their hold over Lesser Pulu up to 747. The Tibetan prince Jan-tsa-iha-bdon, whom a recent writer has identified with Shalya who led an army of 8,00,000 according to the *Rājataranginī*,<sup>46</sup> invaded the eastern region of the empire of Kashmīra.<sup>47</sup> It may well be that during this war the life of Lalitāditya came to an end.

## XV

### THE TUSSLE OF THE TURKS AND THE GURJARAS

The defeat of Yashovarman and later the disaster of Lalitāditya left the Turkī Shāhi chiefs supreme all over the Punjāb and the north-west. Sometime after the middle of the eighth century A.D., they founded a powerful kingdom with their capital at Udabhāndapura on the Indus. But at the end of that century or the beginning of the next, the Gurjara-Pratihāra rulers of Kanauj lashed out at the Turk chiefs of the Punjāb, as is clear from the reference to the *Turushkas*, among those defeated by Mihirabhoja, in the Gwālīor *prashasti*.<sup>48</sup> After the brief and inglorious reign of Rāmabhadra (A. D. 833-836), the valiant and energetic Mihirabhoja (A. D. 836-890) sent an expedition in the Punjāb and the north-west under the command of Harsharāja Guhila who conquered all the kings of those regions and presented horses to his master as trophies of war. After this conquest, the Punjāb was annexed to the Pratihāra empire. The Trigarta or the region watered by the three rivers, Sutlej, Beās and Rāvī, was probably placed under the Chandra chiefs and west Punjāb was placed under Alakhana with his headquarters at the newly founded city of Gujarāt. Further north, a revolution was brought about at Ohind and the Brāhman minister Lalliya or Kallar managed to depose the Turkī ruler Laghturman. Thus the Punjāb came under the sway of the Gurjaras.

## XVI

### KASHMĪRA ENTERS THE STAGE

The paramountcy of the Gurjara-Pratihāras over the Punjāb roused the suspicion of the Kashmīra king Shankaravarman (A. D. 833-902). Towards the end of the ninth century, when the Gurjara-Pratihāra

emperor Mihirabhoja was preoccupied with his adversaries, particularly the Rāshtrakūtas, he marched at the head of a vast army into the Punjāb. Prithvīchandra, the ruler of Trigarta, offered his submission, and Alakhana, the governor of west Punjāb, had to sue for peace by surrendering the Takka territory or the region to the south of the Pir Panjāl Range. But the Kashmīra monarch could not bring down Lalliya to his knees. He even lost his life in the hills of Urashā (modern Hazārā), not far from Ohind.

Lalliya's successor Sāmantadeva reaped the fruits of the struggle of Kashmīra and Kanauj. It appears that he was an important ruler in the whole of the Punjāb, for his coins are found in Sultānpur in the Jullundur Doāb, Sunet near Ludhiānā, and Joner, Sadhaurā and Kapālamochan. But a son of Lalliya named Toramāna, in order to get his ancestral throne, went over to Kashmīra and persuaded the queen-mother Sugandhā to launch an expedition against Ohind. Accordingly, Prabhākaradeva marched against Sāmantadeva and defeated him and installed Toramāna on the throne of the Shāhis, under the name Kamaluka or Kamalavarman. The new ruler was naturally friendly to Kashmīra. In this situation Mahendrapāla granted fiefs to the Tomara chiefs of the family of Jaula in the Karnāl district. Their inscription at Pehowā is very famous.

Kamalavarman's successor Bhīma cleaved even more closely to Kashmīra. He married his daughter to Simharāja, the king of Lohara. The latter's daughter Diddā became the queen of the Kashmīra monarch Kshemagupta (A. D. 950-58). Bhīma even built a temple of Vishnu, called Bamzu, in Kashmīra. In the troubled period of the reign of the Gurjara-Pratīhāra king Mahīpāla (A. D. 912-44) he spread his influence over considerable parts of the Punjāb and assumed the imperial title of *Mahārājādhirāja Parameshvara*.

## XVII

### THE SHĀHIS DOMINATE THE SCENE

After tiding over his difficulties, Mahīpāla invaded Kashmīra and the Shāhi kingdom with a vast army of horses and elephants and rehabilitated his lost influence over them. As a result, the Shāhi ruler transferred his alliance from Kashmīra to Kanauj. Hence the ruling house of Kashmīra again invaded the Shāhi realm and captured its chief

Thakkana, as we learn from Kalhana. But soon afterwards a new ruler Jayapāla came to the Shāhi throne. He befriended the Gurjara-Pratīhāras, but the position of the latter speedily worsened leaving the field free for him. In a short time he consolidated his hold from Lamghān to Sirhind and from Kashmīra to Multān. Besides his capital at Ohind, he set up a second capital at Bhatindā. To his east were the Tomara chiefs of Haryānā and Delhī and to his south the Muslim rulers of Multān. When the Pratīhāras began to decline, an Arab Quraishī dynasty, known as the Ghālibīs, descended from Samā bin Lu'ayy, ruled over Multān from A. D. 942 to 976 and began to encroach on the Punjāb. As the *Hudud-al-Ālam* states, they occupied Lāhore, a city known as Ramiyān at a distance of five days journey from the Pratīhāra administrative centre, Jullundur, and even Birozā, a city founded by the Pratīhāras in that region. Though the Shāhi ruler Jayapāla was dominant over the Punjāb, he could not curb the Muslim rulers of Multān, since he was hard-pressed by the Ghaznavids in the north. Rather the pressure from the north forced him to befriend the Muslim rulers of Multān in order to avoid a war on two fronts. As for the Pratīhāras, their power was on the wane and they could not risk any war in the Punjāb even in their palmy days, when their army in the Punjāb numbered seven to nine hundred thousand. They could not overpower Multān, because, as the Muslim writers Masūdī and Istakhri state, the Muslim rulers of that place threatened to break the idol of the sun-god, which was held in great veneration throughout the country, if the invading armies did not retrace their steps. So this Muslim state continued to exist.

The aforesaid equilibrium of the Punjāb was shattered at the end of the tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh by the invasions of Mahmūd Ghaznavī.

## XVIII

### SOME ASPECTS OF SOCIETY AND CULTURE FROM THE SEVENTH TO THE TENTH CENTURY

During this period, despite frequent political changes, the people of the Punjāb continued to enjoy affluence and prosperity. Agriculture, industry and trade flourished, and rich crops and abundant yields of fruits and flowers made the land famous as the legendary home of plenty and prosperity. Besides the *Harshacharita* of Bāna (first half of seventh

century A. D.), the *Yashastilakachampū* of Somadeva (tenth century) and the *Jasaharacariu* of Pushpadanta (tenth century) are eloquent in the description of the affluence of its people. We find in them glowing accounts of the Yaudheya country which, at the time, stood for parts of the east Punjāb. Likewise, in the *Hudud-al-Ālam* we read a lot about the industrial and commercial importance of this region. According to it, Jullundur was famous for the production of great quantities of velvet and other fabrics, both plain and figured. The city called Slapur or Slayur, which probably represents Seng-ha-pu-lo of Hiuen Tsang or modern Simhapura, was known for sugar, sugarcandy, honey, coconuts, cows, sheep and camels. It was a large town with markets, merchants and commodities. Many kinds of coins, e.g. *barada*, *nakhwar*, *shahani*, *kabubra kimavan* and *kura*, were prevalent there. The horse fairs of Pehowā were attended by merchants from large parts of northern India. As regards land system and administration, this region must have witnessed the same sort of feudal set-up which was in vogue at this time in considerable parts of northern India.

## XIX

### THE HERITAGE OF HISTORY

The above survey of the history of the Punjāb up to the tenth century A. D. shows a large number of gaps and lacunae, which have got to be filled in by scholars and historians. A thorough survey of the Punjāb from the archaeological, literary and socio-cultural points of view is the pressing need of the hour. Yet this outline brings to light some significant features of the history and culture of the Punjāb. It reveals that this region not only played an important part in the history of India but also acted as the crossroads of many movements of culture, commerce and peoples in Asia. Thus, it became a cockpit, a crucible and a confluence, in which there was an unending amalgamation of communities and cultures resulting in a broad, pragmatic, experimental and utilitarian outlook and a robust, clear-cut and comprehensive commonsense view, which cut at the root of all sorts of dogmas, conventions and conservatism. In the dawn of history, the Vedas adumbrated a philosophy of cosmic cohesion and harmony; next, the Upanishads expounded a doctrine of the fundamental unity of the self and the supreme self; then the *Gītā* taught the synthesis of knowledge (*jnāna*),



faith (*bhakti*) and action (*karma*), as the basis of a sound norm of conduct ; lastly, some schools of Mahāyāna stood for the eligibility of all men to spiritual fulfilment through active service of the living beings rather than cowardly escape from the world ; at the fag-end of our period powerful teachers like Jālandharanātha lashed out at the inequities of the socio-religious system and Gorakhanātha stood for a strong and clean life of self-control and inner discipline and purged the Nātha-Siddha cult of the licentious practices that had crept into it. All these great movements of thought and belief brought about a renovation and reinvigoration in the whole complex of Indian culture from time to time.

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## CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA—A NATIVE OF PUNJĀB

HARI RAM GUPTA

Vincent A. Smith writes that Chandragupta Maurya ranks "among the greatest and most successful kings known to history."<sup>1</sup> Most of the historians, both Indian and foreign, hold that he belonged to Bihār, and that he called himself Maurya because his mother was the keeper of royal peacocks (otherwise *mōr*) at Pātaliputra, that he came to the Punjāb and conquered it, and that afterwards with the help of the Punjāb army he seized the Nanda empire.

It had taken Alexander, one of the greatest military leaders the world has known, one year and four months to subdue the people of the Punjāb only along the foot of the hills up to the river Beās. Alexander was at Jalālābād, in Afghānistān, in June, 327 B.C. He reached the Beās in September, 326 B. C. Thus in covering, during this period of more than a year and a quarter, a distance of approximately 500 miles, his progress on the average was about one mile a day. It does not seem probable that a young man from Bihār without any resources in men, money and material or political and social influence could have conquered Punjāb with ease. Besides, no Indian was ever called after his mother. Surnames are generally assumed after one's native place, caste or father. Further, Chandragupta would not have liked to show that he was the son of a woman who was a keeper of peacocks.

Sir H. T. Holdich, who spent a large part of his service period in the North-West Frontier, says that the ancient city of Nysa, the capital of the Assakenoi or Ashvakas, stood in the Swāt country in the valley of Koh-i-Mor.<sup>2</sup> Nysa was a town as well as a hill state. The town is now extinct. The triple-peaked mountain overshadowed this town. The three peaks of this mountain are called Mor or Meros, Korasibie and Kondasbe. These peaks are visible from Peshāwar, not very far to the north of Malākand Pass. The Meros of the Greek classics are the people of Koh-i-Mor. They contributed a contingent of three hundred horsemen who remained with Alexander throughout his journey in India. They were sent back home in October, 326 B. C., when Alexander was embarking on his voyage down the rivers to the sea.<sup>3</sup>

It appears that Chandragupta belonged to the Kshatriya caste of the ruling Ashvaka tribe of the Koh-i-Mó'r territory, and called himself Maurya after his homeland.

McCrinkle, in his book on Alexander's invasion says: "From the remark of Plutarch that in the early years he had seen Alexander, we may infer that he was a native of the Punjáb."<sup>4</sup>

Appian, a historian of Syrian empire founded by Seleucos, wrote about A. D. 123 that Chandragupta was the "king of Indians who dwelt about the Indus."<sup>5</sup> The Ashvakas claimed their descent from the lunar dynasty. Megasthenes records that Chandragupta belonged to the lunar dynasty.<sup>6</sup> It seems probable that he was a scion of a ruling house in what we today call the North-West Frontier Province, and it was in that capacity that he had waited upon the Greek monarch.

There was another prince of this region named Shashigupta. He was a ruler of some hilly state lying between Hindkoh (now known as Hindükush) and the Indus. Massaga and Aornos were its chief cities. During Alexander's campaign of Bactria, Shashigupta fought against him on the side of his friend, Bessus, the rebel satrap of Bactria. When this prince was defeated, Shashigupta joined Alexander. He rendered valuable and faithful service to him in subduing the numerous Kshatriya princes of Assakenoi or Ashvaka tribe. Aornos, an exceptionally strong rock-citadel, occupied a highly strategic position as it commanded the passage from the north-west to the plains of India. Here Alexander faced the toughest resistance. He entrusted Shashigupta with the charge of this great fortress. Arrian calls Shashigupta the "Satrap of Assakenoi," who was a Hindu. Murree was perhaps another centre of the Ashvaka people. It is not clear if Chandragupta was related to Shashigupta. Perhaps both belonged to two different sections of the Ashvakas.<sup>7</sup>

Chandragupta's contemporary, and three or four years his senior in age, was Chānakya. Chānakya was born in a Brāhman family at Takshashilā (Taxilā in Rāwalpindī district), the capital of Gāndhāra, about 346 B. C. His original name was Vishnugupta. But his parents called him by the pet name of Chānakya. In childhood he became an orphan. As he possessed dark colour and ugly features, but sharp intelligence, and as Takshashilā was a great seat of learning, his mother wanted him to become a teacher in which profession intellect counted more than physical appearance. He joined the school of Vedas and Astrology. His real inclination, however, lay in statecraft. He carefully studied the constitutions of numerous states existing in the Punjāb at that time. There

were several kingdoms and many republics. He had seen their pitiable condition due to mutual jealousy, rivalry and constant warfare. He had also studied the constitution of the Nanda empire which extended all over northern India from the borders of the Punjāb to the Bay of Bengāl.

He came to the conclusion that India could prosper under a strong ruler whose government covered the whole country. Thus an imperial state was his ideal. After a great deal of thought and concentration, he wrote a book on the science of polity. This was entitled *Arthashastra*. It was to serve the purpose of a guide or manual for kings. It told them how to acquire power and preserve it.

Chānakya set himself up as a teacher of statecraft in the city of Takshashilā. Within a short space of time his fame spread far and wide. Young princes thronged to him from all parts of the country, and, after studying for seven or eight years, got the degree in that subject. One of his brilliant and favourite pupils was Chandragupta.

Chānakya tested the veracity of his *Arthashastra* in his class where he invited full discussion and open criticism of his views from his pupils most of whom belonged to the ruling families.

At Pātaliputra, the capital of Magadha, there was a high council of learned professors. It had been in existence for a long time. Anybody who wrote something of value or discovered some scientific truth had to appear before this body to establish the merit of his own work. If the judges approved of it, he was awarded a prize of one thousand gold coins, freedom from payment of taxes and other state contributions for life and a roll of honour. The emperor of Magadha was its patron.

Chānakya applied for the prize and left Takshashilā for Pātaliputra. Chandragupta seems to have accompanied his teacher. He was still in his teens. He had a daring and intrepid spirit. It appears that Chandragupta interviewed the emperor and accepted a position at the court. Meanwhile, Chānakya appeared before the synod and explained the principles of government and diplomacy contained in his book. This was the only work on the subject and it drew admiration from all. Chānakya was awarded the prize and the title of Kautilya in addition.

It was an old tradition at Pātaliputra that the prize-winners were awarded the prize and other distinctions by the emperor at a special function. Chānakya reached the hall of audience rather early and occupied an empty seat in the front row. This seat was meant for some body else. When the emperor arrived, one of his courtiers asked Chānakya to vacate the seat. He refused to do so. At this some attendants

used force to get Chānakya out. The emperor expressed displeasure at Chānakya's behaviour. Chānakya grew furious and abused the court for the ill-treatment meted out to him. Chandragupta joined his teacher in the protest. Chānakya left the hall without receiving the prize with the determination to root out the Nanda dynasty.

The Greek writer Justin quoted by McCrindle says that Chandragupta by his insolent behaviour had offended the king Nanda who ordered that Chandragupta be put to death. The young prince took to flight. Overcome by fatigue, he rested under a tree and fell asleep. A lion of enormous size approached him and licked with its tongue the sweat oozing profusely from his body. When Chandragupta awoke, the lion quickly left him. Justin says that this extraordinary incident inspired the young prince to aspire for the throne of Magadha. While at the Magadha court, he had seen that the king was held in great contempt by his subjects. Plutarch tells us that Chandragupta often spoke of the ease with which Alexander would have conquered the great kingdom of Magadha, if he had taken the advantage of the extreme unpopularity of its ruler and had invaded it.

Chandragupta came back to Takshashilā and met Chānakya. Like Bismarck, Chānakya was fired with patriotism for his homeland, Gāndhāra. He had written in *Arthashāstra* that anyone abusing Gāndhāra and its people must be punished. He resolved to see Chandragupta, a Gāndhāra prince, on the throne of the Nanda empire.

On his departure from India, Alexander had left no Greek garrisons in the Punjab. The country was entrusted to the care of Poros. Āmbhi, the king of Takshashilā, was associated with him as a colleague. Philippos, the Greek viceroy, and Eudemos, commandant of a Thracian contingent, were left behind to supervise the native princes.<sup>8</sup>

"Indian people," says McCrindle, "were too proud and warlike to brook long the burden and reproach of foreign thraldom."<sup>9</sup> Philippos was murdered by his mercenary troops about two months after Alexander's departure. From Karmania, Alexander sent orders to Eudemos to act as Resident pending the appointment of a Greek viceroy. Eudemos did not have an adequate force to enforce his authority. He managed to stay for some time, and left India with 120 elephants and a small force of infantry and cavalry. Vincent A. Smith is of the view that these elephants were obtained by him by treacherously slaying an Indian prince, probably Poros, with whom he was associated as a colleague.<sup>10</sup> Alexander died in June, 323 B. C.

Here was an opportunity for Chandragupta and Chānakya. Justin says that, having collected a band of robbers, Chandragupta instigated the Indians to overthrow the foreign government of the Greeks.<sup>11</sup> According to Smith, the general rising in the Punjāb took place in October, 323 B. C., only four months after Alexander's death. Macedonian authority in India ended in 322 B.C.<sup>12</sup>

The fact that Chandragupta and the Maurya dynasty which he founded belonged to the Punjāb can alone fully account for the very strong hold that this dynasty had exercised for several generations on the entire western land-frontier of India.

Further evidence may be adduced from certain historical facts in support of this assertion. It is well known that Seleucos was defeated by Chandragupta Maurya in 303 B. C., and that the vanquished general had to give his daughter in marriage to the victor as a token of defeat and submission. He also ceded the provinces of Kābul, Kandāhār, Herāt and Makrān. In the days of great caste rigidity, none other than a Punjābī could accept a foreign girl, a *mlechchha*. In the *Mahābhārata*, Punjāb is spoken of as a land of irreligious people : "One should not go to the Vāhika in which the five rivers and the Indus as the sixth flow and which is excommunicated, as it were, by the Himālayas, by the Gangā, by the Yamunā and by the Sarasvatī, and is devoid of true religion and cleanliness."<sup>13</sup> It was probably under pressure of his queen that at the same time Seleucos appointed Megasthenes as his envoy at the court of Chandragupta to ensure good treatment to his daughter in a far-off foreign land.

Secondly, in the whole of India, only Punjābīs have been the most aggressive people over the numberless generations. Throughout history, Punjābīs are known to have established empires in India. In ancient times, it was Chandragupta Maurya who ruled over a vast empire extending to the Hindkoh in the north-west. Even the Guptas are believed to have originated from the Punjāb. Harsha, Sher Shāh Sūrī, Hyder Ali and Ranjīt Singh were all Punjābīs. At the advent of Islām, the Shāhi rulers of Kābul were Mohyāl Brāhmans of the Punjāb. Under the great Mughals Afghānistān was under viceroys who were either foreigners from Central Asia, or Punjābīs or Rājput. During the later Mughal period the Marāthās tried to occupy Punjāb in 1758, but they were expelled soon afterwards. They were given a crushing defeat at the third battle of Pānīpat. Afterwards they never tried to seize the Punjāb.

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TOPOGRAPHY OF THE PUNJĀB AND ITS ADJOINING  
REGIONS AS REFLECTED IN DANDIN'S  
PROSE ROMANCES

D. K. GUPTA

Dandin is one of the three great writers of prose romances in Sanskrit, the other two being Subandhu ( c. A. D. 600 ) and Bāna (A.D. 600-50). He lived in the court of Narasimhavarman II (*Rājasimha*) who ruled, from c. A.D. 680 to 722, over the Pallava *janapada* with its capital at Kānchīpuram in the present Tamil Nādu state. Dandin wrote two prose romances, namely the *Dashakumāracharita* and the *Avantisundarikathā*, besides a poem in *double entendre* and a work on poetics.

His prose romances portray the life of his time in its entirety and in genuine demeanour without fear or prejudice. Though he belonged, by birth, to south India, and his literary activities remained confined, for the most part of his life, to the southern regions, he was not unacquainted with the northern part of the subcontinent. He travelled in his early life over different parts of the vast land, and he commanded, by culture, a liberal and cosmopolitan outlook. During his travels far and wide, he came into close contact with the people of varied habits, customs, manners and dresses and dialects, and he observed them with keen inquisitive mind. Besides, he was a gifted writer with distinctly realistic approach to men and matters.

Although his description of the regions of his nativity is more minute and precise and hence more authentic, yet we find in his writings a fairly comprehensive account of the topography of other regions as well, and we are able to gather through them an adequate outline, if not a vivid picture, of the topography of the Punjāb and its adjoining regions, much of which appears to have been based on his personal knowledge. For his delineation of the geography of this part of the subcontinent, especially of its physical aspect, Dandin draws upon the rich geographical data contained in the Purānas also. He has, however, not allowed his account to form a mere reiteration of the Purānic matter.

Of the mountains of this part of the land, Dandin makes a repeated mention of the Himavat, also known as Himāchala and Hima-

shaila,<sup>1</sup> which is the famous Himālayan range. The mountain has been noted, in particular, for its remaining clad with snow in the cold season and for its high altitude and natural grandeur. The great range, which extended from Kashmīr in the west to the extremities of Āssām in the east, bounded the Punjāb on its north and north-east. Some other mountains of this part of the country finding a mention in Dandin's romances are Nishadha, Hiranyashringa, Munjavat and Anjana.<sup>2</sup> Of these, the Nishadha is represented today by the Hindūkush mountain to the north of the river Kābul. The mountain formed in ancient times the north-western boundary of the greater Punjāb. The Hiranyashringa mountain has been described by Dandin as situated to the north-west of the Himālaya, and as such it may be identified with the Nāngā Parbat standing between the river-valleys of the Indus and the Jhelum in Kashmīr. The Munjavat mountain was possibly the same as the *Rigvedic* Mūjavat famous for the cultivation of the *soma* plant.<sup>3</sup> According to the *Atharvaveda*, the mountain was situated near Bāhlika,<sup>4</sup> the modern Balkh or Wazīrābād in north Afghānistān. As Dr V. S. Agrawāla points out, a part of land adjacent to Balkh is still known as Munjān with its dialect called Munjānī.<sup>5</sup> This Munjān appears to represent the old Maunjāyana *janapada* referred to in Panini's work on grammar<sup>6</sup> and identified with the region about the Munjavat or Mūjavat mountain. The Vedic people of the Punjāb imported, in large quantities, the *soma* plant from this land. The Anjana mountain, referred to as Anjanāgiri by Pānini,<sup>7</sup> is the present Sulaimān range to the north of Sind and west of the river Indus. This mountain, which formed the south-western rampart of the ancient Punjāb, provided it with rich stock of collyrium for its own use and also for commercial purposes.<sup>8</sup>

Of the forests referred to by Dandin, Panchanadāranya or the Panchanada forest is the woodland extending from the middle of Kashmīr to the Sirmūr Hills through which the five rivers of the Punjāb and the rivers of the present-day Haryānā flow.<sup>9</sup> A part of this long line of forest near the present Kālkā in Ambālā district was known as Kālakāvana.<sup>10</sup> This forest has been described in Dandin's *Avantisundarikathā* as located on the foothill of the Himālaya, whence the rivers of the Kurukshetra region take their origin. Another forest of this part of the subcontinent finding a mention in Dandin is the Hāritavana.<sup>11</sup> This forest, which has been referred to in the context of a Yavana king presenting a gift of horses to the Magadha ruler, may be identified with the forest track around Herāt, adjoining the river Harī Rud in west

Afghānistān.

Dandin displays his general acquaintance with the five rivers of the Punjāb flowing through the Panchanada forest.<sup>12</sup> He also refers, along with them, to the river Sindhu which generally formed the western boundary of the ancient Punjāb.<sup>13</sup> The term Sindhu denoted, in ancient times, (i) an ocean, (ii) a river in general, (iii) the river Sindhu, the Indus or Sindh of modern times, and (iv) the land watered by that river. In Dandin the term occurs, in the main, in the last two connotations. As a name for the river Indus, it finds a mention in him, along with the vast stretch of Dhavaladhanvan, in the context of the description of war elephants of the Magadha ruler.<sup>14</sup> Dhavaladhanvan, 'the white desert,' is known today as the Thār or Indian Desert which soaks up the Haryānā streams in its thirsty sands. The western and the south-western course of the Indus below its union with the Punjāb rivers flowed by the side of this vast desert. The river gave its name to the Sindhu *janapada*, the cradle of the Indus-Valley Civilization, at least as early as the period of the *Mahābhārata* which frequently refers to this *janapada* as a western state.<sup>15</sup>

Of the five rivers of the Punjāb, Vitastā, the Hydaspes or Bidaspes of Ptolemy, is known today as Jhelum. Its alternative name in Kashmīr is Bihat or Beth, which is reminiscent of its old designation. The river had another name, Shrī or Shrīnadī, also,<sup>16</sup> and it is still preserved in the name of Srīnagar situated on its bank. The river springs from the easternmost fringe of the Pīr Panjāl Range in Kashmīr, and takes its course along its northern and western walls before it bends its stream southwards to enter into the plains of the Punjāb near the city Jhelum which probably lent its name to the river in the later times. It forms, with the river Indus in the west, the famous Sind-Sāgar Doāb which was the core of the Sindhu *janapada* of ancient times. The river Chandra-bhāgā, which is the Asiknī of the *Rigveda* and the Akesines of Arrian, represented the combined stream of the rivers Chandrā and Bhāgā springing from the north-eastern part of the present-day Himāchal Pradesh and uniting together at Tandī near Kyelāng in Lāhaul-Spītī district of the state. The river is known today as Chenāb, and forms, with the river Jhelum in the west, the Jech Doāb. Irāvātī, the *Rigvedic* Parushnī, is known today as Rāvī. It springs from a place near Barā Bhāngal in Kāngrā district and unites with the river Chenāb just below Shorkot, the ancient Shibipura, in Jhang-Maghiānā region. The river forms, with Chenāb in the west, the famous Rechnā Doāb. The Devikā and the

Ramyahradā, mentioned alongside these rivers in Dandin's *Avantisundarikathā*, may be identified with the Degh and Ujjh rivers respectively which are tributaries of the Rāvi.<sup>17</sup> Vipāshā, the Vipāsh of the *Rigvedic* hymns, is the modern Beās which rises in the Kulū Hills and joins the river Sutlej near Harīke, in Amritsar district. It forms, with the river Rāvi in the west, the Bārī Doāb and, with the river Sutlej in the south, the Bist-Jullundur Doāb. The latter river was known in ancient times as Shutudrī or Shatadru. Dandin and other classical writers of Sanskrit know it by the name Shatadru. The river takes its rise from the south-western part of the Kailāsa mountain, and, flowing almost westwards, unites with the river Chenāb. The combined stream of these two, or in effect all the five, rivers of the Punjāb was known in ancient times as Panchanada, and this name, which is at least as old as the *Mahābhāshya* of Patanjali (c. 200 B. C.),<sup>18</sup> is still preserved in the designation Panjnad given to the united stream.

Another river of this part of the land is Kūlā which has been mentioned, along with the Kamboja, Vanāyu and Gāndhāra *janapadas*, in the context of a description of the war horses of the Magadha ruler.<sup>19</sup> This river may be identified with Zhob (a western tributary of Indus) on the bank of which is situated the town Kulāchī in Derā Ismāil Khān district in Pākistān.

Among the rivers of the cis-Sutlej part of the Punjāb mentioned in Dandin's *Avantisundarikathā*, the Sarasvatī,<sup>20</sup> known today as Sarsutī, springs from the Sirmūr Hills of the Siwālik Range and emerges into the plains at Ād-Badrī, most probably the Badarīpāchana of the *Mahābhārata*, in Ambālā district. It flows, with frequent disappearances, along the places Chalnaur, Bhawānīpur, Bālchappar, Piplī and Kurukshetra-Thānesar, and is joined by the river Mārkanḍā at Urnai near Pehowā, the ancient Prithūdaka.<sup>21</sup> The river falls into the Ghaggar near Shatrānā, in Patiālā district. It appears that the river Ghaggar, united with the Sarasvatī, bore in ancient times the latter's name or it was considered an upper stream of the Sarasvatī itself. The river is lost in the desert to the west of Sirsā, the ancient Shirīshaka. The place of its final disappearance was known in ancient times as Vinashana, denoting literally the place of perishing.<sup>22</sup> The precise location of this Vinashana is doubtful because of the uncertainty regarding the exact place where the river finally disappeared in early times. Most probably it lay to the south-west of the Kurukshetra *janapada* somewhere in the Sūratgarh-Hissār region.<sup>23</sup> The dry bed of the river, however, is traced up to Marot in the Bahāwalpur

region. In the early Vedic period the river probably joined the Indus or flowed into the Arabian Sea. Drishadvatī, another river of this region, is the present Chautāng river.<sup>24</sup> It rises in the Sirmūr Hills and runs along the places, Lādwā, Jind, Hānsī and Hissār in Haryānā and Bhadrā in Gangānagar district of Rājasthān. Its dry bed is further traced along the places, Nohar, Tibī and Sūratgarh where it unites with Ghaggar or rather Sarasvatī. In the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods, the Doāb of the rivers Sarasvatī and Drishadvatī was known as Brahmāvarta.

Dandin shows his general familiarity with the topography of the regions which are now included in the Punjāb in its wider connotation, that is, the undivided Punjāb of pre-independence days. This Punjāb, which approximates in extent to the land of the seven rivers of the *Rigveda* rather than to that of five or six rivers of the *Mahābhārata*, formed, topographically, the north-western part of the Āryāvarta, the land lying between the Himālaya in the north and the Vindhya Range in the south and bordered on other sides by the oceans.<sup>25</sup> The Āryāvarta, which was thus equivalent to north India, was conveniently divided into four zones, *viz.* Madhyadesha, Udīchya, Pratičhya and Paurastya. Madhyadesha, the middle land, was the region lying between Prayāga (Allāhābād) in the east and the Vinashana (the Sūratgarh-Hissār region) in the west and bordered on the north and south by the Himālaya and Vindhya ranges, respectively.<sup>26</sup> The vast stretch of land lying to the west of Vinashana, from the river Narmadā in the south to the Kashmir Valley in the north, was traditionally divided into Pratičhya (western) and Udīchya (northern) zones, while the land from Prayāga to Prāgjyotisha (Āssām) was popularly known as Paurastya or the eastern zone.

Of these four zones, the Udīchya and the Madhyadesha included the *janapadas*, or territories, which now constitute the Punjāb in its wider sense noted above. While the Udīchya of these zones included the trans-Sutlej part of the Punjāb, the Madhyadesha covered the cis-Sutlej part of it.

The Madhyadesha has been extolled by Manu as *yajniyabhūmi*, the holy land of sacrifices,<sup>27</sup> and, following him, Dandin also calls it by that appellation, though he extends its use to a wider territory, that is, the whole of the Āryāvarta. The north-western part of this holy middle land was known as Brahmarsidesha, the land of the *brāhmana* sages, which was composed chiefly of four *janapadas*, namely Kurukshetra in the north, Pānchāla in the east, Shūrasena in the south and Matsya in the west.<sup>28</sup> Of these, only the Kurukshetra *janapada* comes within the purview

of our concept of the Punjāb. This Kurukshetra extended, as a *janapada*, from the river Sarasvatī in the north to Indraprastha, the region about Delhi, in the south and from Vinashana in the south-west to Hastināpura (in Meerut district) or rather the Yamunā river in the east.<sup>29</sup> A part of this larger Kurukshetra was known as Brahmāvarta, the land of the holy *brāhmanas*. Dandin locates this Brahmāvarta in the immediate neighbourhood of the Brahmarshidesha.<sup>30</sup> The real position, however, is that it formed a part, and only a small part, of the latter. It denoted, as we have noted above, the narrow Doāb of Sarasvatī and Drishadvatī rivers, roughly corresponding to parts of the present districts of Ambālā, Kurukshetra, Karnāl, Jīnd and Hissār. Apart from being a *janapada*, Kurukshetra denoted a city also, and as a city it is represented today by a small town bearing the old name near Thānesar, the ancient Sīhānvīshvara, the famous seat of the Vardhana kings. The past glory of these twin cities still lives, and it has now been rejuvenated by the opening of the Kurukshetra University near the old towns. Towards the south of the Kurukshetra *janapada* lay the principality of the Yaudheyas who occupied at this time a narrow stretch of land from Bahāwalpur in the west to Bharatpur in the east.<sup>31</sup> A part of this land along the lower bank of the river Sutlej in the old Bahāwalpur state is known today as Johiā Bār, the land of the descendants of the Yaudheyas.

To the north of Kurukshetra *janapada* and south of the river Sutlej lay the principality of the Mālava people. The descendants of these people still occupy this region known today as Mālwa and comprising roughly of the present districts of Ferozepore, Farīdkot, Bhatindā, Ludhiānā and Sangrūr. The Mālavas were an ancient people who lived in Pānini's time (5th century B. C.) and also at the time of Alexander's invasion (c. 327 B. C.) in the territory about the confluence of the rivers Chenāb and Rāvī to the south of Jhang district, and also spread over the southern part of the Sind-Sāgar Doāb and the Multān region.<sup>32</sup> In the subsequent centuries they migrated towards the east and settled in the cis-Sutlej part of the present-day Punjāb (India) called, after them, by the appellation Mālwa.<sup>33</sup>

To the west and the north of the Mālava principality lay the land watered by the five rivers, from Jhelum to Sutlej, and known on that count as Panchanada.<sup>34</sup> It was equivalent to the trans-Sutlej part of the larger Punjāb bordered in the west by the river Indus. The *janapada* finds a frequent mention in the *Mahābhārata* which also designates it as Āratta country or the land of the Vāhika people.<sup>35</sup> The north-western part

of this country was known as Trigarta, signifying a land of three river-valleys.<sup>36</sup> The three rivers in question were Rāvī, Beās and Sutlej, and the land of Trigarta thus comprised of the present districts of Kapūrthālā, Jullundur, Hoshiārpur and Kāngrā and parts of the districts of Amritsar and Gurdāspur. The *janapada* finds a mention in Pānini's work on grammar which also notices its alternative name Jālandharāyana, reminiscent of the present city of Jullundur.<sup>37</sup> The *Mahābhāshya* refers to this country as a region often afflicted with drought,<sup>38</sup> and this unhappy feature of the land has been noted by Dandin also.<sup>39</sup> It appears that a part of this *janapada* went at times without adequate rainfall, and this resulted in severe famines.

The north-western fringe of the Panchanada formed in ancient times the *janapada* of Gāndhāra, which was particularly known for its excellent steed.<sup>40</sup> The country extended from the river Kunār (a tributary of Kābul river) in Afghānistān to the river Sohan (a tributary of Indus) running through the districts of Attock and Rāwalpindī. Its capital was Takshashilā, the present Taxilā about 35 km north-west of Rāwalpindī. To the south of Gāndhāra lay the Sindhudeshā, the south-western part of the Pañchanada.<sup>41</sup> The river Sindhu (Indus), which gave its name to the country, formed its western boundary. This *desha* is represented today by the Sind-Sāgar Doāb. As a *janapada*, it might have also included the narrow stretch of land which lay close to the river Indus. Like Gāndhāra, this country also was famous for excellent horses.<sup>42</sup> Hiuen Tsang, who travelled all over India during his fourteen years' stay (A. D. 630-44) in the country, described it as an independent kingdom in his time, and also mentioned three other states as its dependencies.<sup>43</sup> To the south and east of the Sindhu *janapada* was situated the Sauvīra country which extended from the Sukkur district (in Sind) in the south to Multān or the junction of the rivers, Chenāb and Rāvī, in the north.<sup>44</sup> The *janapada* was particularly famous for its grape-wine which was called *sauviraka* after its name and was exported to the neighbouring *janapadas*.<sup>45</sup> The *janapadas*, Sindhu and Sauvīra, formed together, in the age of the *Mahābhārata*, a confederate state (*sangharājya*),<sup>46</sup> and their union appears to have continued in the subsequent periods also.

The people of the Panchanada were strong in build and were sturdy in their manners and behaviour. They consisted mostly of soldier communities known in ancient times as *āyudhajīvins*.<sup>47</sup> These people faced, off and on, attacks from foreign invaders who sometimes succeeded in occupying a part of their territories. Some of these intruders permanently

settled in the land and lived with the native people. This occasioned a close cultural interaction and an introduction, into the native stock, of a number of exotic elements, resulting into a steady growth of a liberal and unorthodox outlook and, again, certain outlandish features in the social life of the people of the land.<sup>48</sup> One of the important features of their social life was the fact that the soldier communities of the land allowed the *kshatriyas* to act as priests in the sacrifices performed by them.<sup>49</sup> This feature of their social life coupled with their non-conformist attitude towards religious trivialities might have hurt the feelings of the orthodox *brāhmanas* of the native land and, besides, might have adversely affected their profession as priests and made their living difficult among, in particular, the Madras, who inhabited the land between the rivers Jhelum and Rāvī, and the neighbouring peoples. Some of these native *brāhmanas* were, in frustration, compelled to take to other professions,<sup>50</sup> while some of them migrated, in search of better prospects, to other countries in the east and the south.<sup>51</sup> One such migration of a large batch of *brāhmana* families from 'the north-western part of the Āryāvarta' which evidently refers to the Panchanada region or, more particularly, the land of the Madras, has been recorded in Dandin's *Avantisundarikathā*.<sup>52</sup> It has been stated, in the introductory part of the work which details the writer's ancestry, that there lay in the north-western part of the Āryadesha, i.e. Āryāvarta, a city named Ānandapura.<sup>53</sup> In this city, as the account goes, there lived a large host of learned *brāhmanas*, who left their homes and hearths and moved southwards till they reached, most probably in the early years of the Gupta period, the Nāsikya (modern Nāsik) region and occupied there a town named Achalapura. Dandin's own ancestors, as he further tells us, belonged to one of these *brāhmana* families. His great-grandfather, Dāmodarasvāmin, who was a gifted poet, continued his search for a still better place or rather a royal court to live in, and finally settled in Kāncīpura in the present-day Tamil Nādu state.

Among the *janapadas* adjacent to the territories of the Punjāb, the Kashmīra *janapada*, mentioned in Dandin's *Avantisundarikathā* as a country famous for excellent horses,<sup>54</sup> lay to the north of Panchanada. The *janapada* denoted, precisely speaking, the upper-Jhelum valley of the present Kashmīr and Jammū state. It comprised roughly of the Doāb of Jhelum and Kishangangā rivers with a part perhaps of the lower-Jhelum tract. Some other bordering countries known for excellent horses were Urashā, Taitila, Kamboja, Bāhlika, Vanāyu, Kālatoya and Kandara.<sup>55</sup>



Of these, Urashā, the Wulashi of Hiuen Tsang, was the narrow Doāb of the upper Indus and Jhelum rivers, the region about Abbottābād in Hazārā district in the North-West Frontier Province. In Harshavardhana's time (A. D. 606-46) it formed a part of Kashmīr which lay to its north-east. To the east of Urashā was situated a small *janapada*, Taitila or Taila by name, in southern stretch of the Kashmīr Valley. It finds a mention in the *Arthashāstra* of Kautilya and also in the *Rājataranginī* of Kalhana, the famous historian of Kashmīr.<sup>56</sup> The Kamboja *janapada*, which is the Kāpisha of the contemporary history, corresponded roughly to the Kābul Valley lying to the west of the Gāndhāra country. To the north-west of Kamboja, beyond Hindūkush mountain, was situated the Bāhlika or Vāhlika *janapada* identified with modern Balkh (Wazīrābād) region in north Afghānistān. The country of Vanāyu lay to the south-east of Kamboja. It is represented today by the Wānā Valley in southern Wazīrīstān. The Sindhu and the Gāndhāra *janapadas* of the ancient Punjāb touched it from the north-west and south-west, respectively. To the south-west of Vanāyu lay the *janapada* of Kālatoya which may be identified with the region about Kalāt in Balūchistān. To its north was situated the *janapada* of Kandara, the present Kandāhār region in the south-eastern part of Afghānistān.

Dandin also refers, while describing the cavalry of the Magadha king, to the principality of the Yavanas or Ionians,<sup>57</sup> which was the north-western part of Indo-Greek settlement somewhere between the Kābul and Kandāhār regions, and to the Pārvateyas who might have been the forest tribes of the north-western parts of the ancient Panchanada.<sup>58</sup> According to the *Mahābhārata*, the Pārvateyas inhabited the hill tracts of the Gāndhāra *janapada*,<sup>59</sup> and the evidence of the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāna* placing them around Nagarahāra identified with modern Jalālābād on the river Kābul in the eastern part of Afghānistān supports this position.<sup>60</sup>

The geographical data, detailed above, pertaining to the Punjāb and its adjoining regions enable us to form an idea of the topography of this part of the subcontinent as it obtained in the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods of Indian history, and credit goes to Dandin for furnishing, through his immortal prose romances in Sanskrit, the data which enlighten us on this important aspect of the history of ancient India and, for that reason, of ancient Punjāb.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Avantisundarikāthā* = ASK (ed. K. S. Mahādeva Sāstrī, Trivandrum, 1954 ), pp. 71, 78, 84, 91, 194, 210-11.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 210-11.
3. *Rigveda* X. 34.1.
4. *Atharvaveda* V. 22; cp. B. D. Upādhyāya : *Vedic Sāhitya aur Samskritī* ( Vārānasī, 1955), p. 353.
5. *Pānini-kālīna Bhāratavarsha* (Vārānasī, 1955). p. 460.
6. *Ashtādhyāyī* of Pānini (ed. Sankara Rāma Sāstrī, Madras, 1937), V.3.116.
7. *Ibid.*, VI. 3. 117.
8. V. S. Agrawāla : *Pānini-kālīna Bhāratavarsha*, pp. 44-5.
9. ASK p. 84.
10. *Loc. cit.* This forest must be distinguished from the Kālakavana mentioned in the *Mahābhāshya* of Patanjali ( II. 4. 10; VI. 3. 109) and identified with the Rāj-mahal Hills in Bihār or with the outskirts of Sāketa.
11. ASK p. 92.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 82, 84. Cp. *Mahābhārata* (Gorakhpur, 1957), VIII. 44. 7.
14. ASK p. 82.
15. VII. 45. 11 ; VIII. 40. 42-3, etc.
16. ASK p. 91.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 84. Devikā is mentioned in Pānini's *Ashtādhyāyī* (VII. 3. 1) and in the *Mahābhārata* (III. 82. 102; XIII. 25. 9) also. The Purānas also know this river ; cp. D. C. Sircār : *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India* (Delhī, 1960), p. 41.
18. *Mahābhāshya* (Delhī, 1967 ) IV. 1. 88; cp. P. D. Agnihotrī : *Patanjali-kālīna Bhārata* (Patnā, 1963), p. 84.
19. ASK p. 91.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 10, 84, 194.
21. D. C. Sircār, *op. cit.*, p. 40. Prithūdaka is mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* ( III. 83. 142-9) and in Rājashekhara's *Kāvyamīmāṃsā* ( Patnā, 1965), p. 237.
22. ASK pp. 84 (*sarasvatyantardhānoddeshā*), 194 (Vinashana). Patanjali in his *Mahābhāshya* (VI. 3. 109) calls it Ādarsha, while Manu (II. 21) knows it as Vinashana.
23. Dr Buddha Prakāsh in his *Political and Social Movements in Ancient Punjab* (Delhī, 1964 ), pp. 232-3, is inclined to identify this Vinashana with Sirsā ( in Hissār district) and Bhatnair (in Gangānagar district of Rājasthān).
24. ASK p. 194. According to the *Mahābhārata* (III. 5. 2, 83, 204), the river flowed to the south of Kurukshetra. Its identification, therefore, with Ghaggar flowing to the north-east of Kurukshetra, suggested by some scholars, is untenable. Also cp. D. C. Sircār, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-2.
25. ASK p. 194 ; cp. *Manusmritī* (Vārānasī, 1970) II. 22. Cp. Āryadesha signifying Āryāvarta in ASK p. 9.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 194 ; cp. *Manusmritī* II. 21. It may be noted that the Purānic concept of Madhyadesha is wider enough to comprehend the Sahyādri in the south and

Magadha in the east.

27. II. 23.
28. ASK p. 194; cp. *Manusmṛiti* II. 19.
29. Cp. V. S. Agrawāla : *Pānini-kālina Bhāratavarsha*, p. 70; D. C. Sircār, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
30. ASK p. 194. When Kālidāsa in his *Meghadūta* (verse 48) takes Brahmāvarta as a *janapada* and regards Kurukshetra as a part of it, he in fact has in mind the city of Kurukshetra and not the wider *janapada*; cp. B. S. Upādhyāya : *Kālidāsa kṛ Bhārata* (Vārānāsī, 1963), vol. I, p. 119.
31. ASK p. 92. The Yaudheyas find a mention in Pānini's work on grammar (*Aṣṭādhyāyī* V.3.117), in the *Mahābhārata* (II. 52.14-7) and in some inscriptions. For their earlier record, see Dr Buddha Prakāsh : *Political and Social Movements in Ancient Punjāb*, pp. 103-5.
32. V. S. Agrawāla : *Pānini-kālina Bhāratavarsha*, pp. 442, 465; *Kādambarī, eka Sāmskritika Adhyayana* (Vārānāsī, 1958), p. 21; Buddha Prakāsh : *Glimpses of Ancient Punjāb* (Patiālā, 1966), pp. 31-52.
33. Buddha Prakāsh, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-2. One of their batches migrated to the Rājasthān side and occupied for some time the region about Karkotnagar or Nagar (near Uniārā in Tonk district) whence they moved further southwards and finally settled, long before sixth century A. D., in the region known today as Mālwā (in Madhya Pradesh). Dandin frequently refers to the Mālavas occupying this region (ASK pp. 38, 72, 76, 108, etc., *Dashakumāracharita*, ed. M. R. Kāle, Delhi, 1966, pp. 103, 135, etc.), and describes their battle with the ruler of Magadha.
34. ASK p. 84.
35. VII. 44. 7, 31-3; also II. 32. 11; VIII. 45. 19.
36. *Dashakumāracharita*, p. 157; ASK p. 200; cp. *Avantisudharīkathāsāra* (a summary, in verse, of the ASK, published in 1957 from Madrās), IV. 165, mentioning Garta which may be taken to signify Trigarta.
37. *Aṣṭādhyāyī* V. 3. 116 (Trigarta) and IV. 2. 53 (*Jālandharōyana*). The *janapada* finds a frequent mention in the *Mahābhārata* (I. 155. 2; II. 27. 18; II. 32. 7; III. 271. 12-4, etc.) also.
38. VIII.1.5.
39. *Dashakumāracharita*, p. 157.
40. ASK pp. 91, 215; cp. V. S. Agrawāla : *Pānini-kālina Bhāratavarsha*, pp. 61-2; D. C. Sircār, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
41. ASK pp. 91, 95, 201; cp. V. S. Agrawāla, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-4.
42. ASK p. 91 : it may be noted that the word *saindhava* in Sanskrit means (i) an inhabitant or a king of Sindhu, (ii) a horse, and (iii) a kind of salt known today as *sendhā namak*.
43. R. C. Majumdar in the *Classical Age* (vol. III of the *History and Culture of the Indian People*, Bombay, 1962), p. 164.
44. ASK p. 169. For its identification, see V. S. Agrawāla : *Pānini-kālina Bhāratavarsha*, p. 64.
45. ASK p. 169; cp. *Mahābhārata* VIII. 40. 38, 40; *Rāmāyana* III. 47. 45. Also see S. N. Vyās : *Rāmāyana-kālina Samskriti* (New Delhi, 1971), p. 92.

46. Cp. *Mahābhārata* VII. 75. 11; also see III. 267. 8, 17; VI. 9. 53; VIII. 40. 42-3. Jayadratha, in the epic, has often been referred to as a king of Sindhu-Sauvīra.
47. *Ashtādhyāyī* V. 3. 114-7. See V. S. Agrawāla: *Pānini-kālīna Bhāratavarsha*, p. 448 ff.
48. These features were noted, with a strong dislike and an open disapprobation, by the easterners who became, in the post-Vedic period, the new heirs to the old Āryan culture. These easterners developed in course of time a strong feeling of hatred and distaste for the people of the Punjāb and in particular for those belonging to the Madradesha with its centre at Shākala identified with the present Siālkot. The *Mahābhārata* (VIII, chapters 40, 44-5) contains an interesting account of a wordy duel between Karna, the ruler of an eastern country, and Shalya, the Madra king. Karna in his strongly-worded onslaught derides the people of the Panchanada as impure and irreligious.
49. *Mahābhārata* VIII. 40. 31; 45. 25-6.
50. *Ibid.*, VIII. 45.6-8.
51. *Ibid.*, VIII. 40.22; 44.4-5.
52. P. 9.
53. This city has been described in the work as 'the crest-jewel of the Āryadesha (Āryāvarta)', and this may be taken to imply that it was situated in the northernmost part of the Āryāvarta. The city may, therefore, be located somewhere in the Gujrāt or Siālkot region. It may be tempting to identify this Ānandapura with the present Ānandpur Sāhib on the bank of Sutlej in Rūpar district, but there is no basis for this identification. The city of Ānandapura has been spoken of in Dandin's text as situated in the north-west of India and in the northernmost fringe of the Āryāvarta; and this location does not suit the present town of Ānandpur Sāhib. Besides, there is no evidence that the town bore this name before A. D. 1666 when Gurū Tegh Bahādūr graced this place, known earlier as Mākhowāl, and gave it the appellation of Ānandpur.
54. *ASK* p. 93.
55. *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 91, 91, 66, 91, 80 and 92 respectively.
56. Kautilya's *Arthashāstra* (ed. R. P. Kāngle, Bombay, 1969), II.30. 29. The Tailagrāma, mentioned in *Rājataranginī* (ed. M. A. Stein, Delhī, 1960), II. 482, belonged to this *janapada*. This place is identified with Tilgām in southern Kashmir.
57. *ASK* p. 92; also cp. *Dashakumāracharita*, p. 155. These people lived in the interior of the subcontinent also, their main occupation being trade and business and cultivation of fine arts, particularly sculpture, and engineering. Some of them lived as sailors, and they sometimes indulged in robbery in the high seas.
58. *ASK* p. 93. These Pārvateyas are different from those of the central part of India referred to elsewhere in *ASK*.
59. See V. S. Agrawāla : *Pānini-kālīna Bhāratavarsha*, pp. 46, 449.
60. *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāna* 57.56; cp. V. S. Agrawāla, *loc. cit.*

## THE SIDDHA TRADITION BEFORE GURŪ NĀNAK

L. M. JOSHI

There are many references to *siddhas*, *yogins* (*jogīs*), *nāthas*, and *avadhūtas*, not only in the *Japu* and the *Sidh-goshti* but also in many other hymns and devotional songs composed by Gurū Nānak and preserved in the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, said to have been compiled in *cir.* A.D. 1604. It is necessary to understand the background and the evolution of the meaning of these important words. This essay seeks to survey the historical development of some of the leading ideas associated with the *siddhas*, *yogins* and *nāthas* of medieval India.

### SIDDHI AND SIDDHAS

The word *siddhi* means 'success', 'perfection', 'supernatural power', 'magical power', 'fulfilment', 'accomplishment', 'hitting of a mark', 'liberation', 'bliss', 'psychic power', 'felicity', 'sanctification', etc. These meanings are found in different contexts in different Sanskrit texts.<sup>1</sup> In Indian religious literature, in the texts on Yoga and Tantra, *siddhi* is a technical word, yet it admits of all the above noted meanings. But *siddhis* or different kinds of 'powers' and 'attainments', physical, hyperphysical and spiritual, have an important and universal position in the Yogic and Tāntrika lore of ancient and medieval India. A person, usually an ascetic, who possesses such powers or perfections is called an 'adept', a 'perfected one' (*siddha*).

The word *siddha* has been translated as 'accomplished', 'fulfilled', 'successful', 'one who has obtained his object', 'perfected', 'one endowed with eight supernormal powers', 'a liberated soul', 'divine', 'semi-divine being', 'an adept in *yoga*', 'a man of magical or miraculous potency', 'a person fully sanctified', etc. Usually, religious personages of great learning, purity and unusual skill are called *siddhas*. In Purānic mythology they are semi-divine beings who along with *munis* (the silent ones) live in the atmosphere between earth and heaven, called Bhuvanloka. Any inspired sage or seer (*rishi*) is often called a *siddha*. According to the *Vāyupurāna*, eighty-eight thousand *siddhas* occupy the regions of the

sky north of the sun and south of the region of the *rishis*.

Technically speaking, a holy person, a monk, a sage, or an ascetic (*yogin*, *jogī*, *bhikshu*, *tāpasa*, *muni*, *yati*, *shramana*, all these are translatable generally as 'ascetic'), possessed of eight kinds of supernatural faculties, is called a *siddha*. These faculties or powers, called *siddhis*, are enumerated in a number of Brāhmanical texts. The *Prapanchasāra-tantra* enumerates the following eight *siddhis* : *animan*, *mahiman*, *gariman*, *laghiman*, *īshitva*, *vashitva*, *prāpti* and *prākāmya*. This text states that "a person who is endowed with these eight powers (*aishvaryas*) is a liberated soul and is called a *yogin*."<sup>2</sup>

The *Yogasūtra-bhāshya* also mentions and explains the eight *siddhis* called *vibhūti*.<sup>3</sup> *Animan* means atomization, power of becoming small like an atom. *Laghiman* means levitation, power of becoming light or small. *Mahiman* means magnification, power of becoming magnified like a mountain or the sky. *Prāpti* means power of obtaining any desired thing, e.g., touching the moon with one's finger-tip. *Prākāmya* is the power of possessing irresistible will, non-obstruction of the desires to penetrate, e.g., the earth. *Vashitva* means mastery over objects and elements. *īshitva* means sovereignty over objects and elements. In the *Kalpataru*, the *Yogasūtra-bhāshya*, etc. *gariman* is omitted and instead *yathā-kāma-vashitā* is added. It means the power to determine things according to one's desire ; e.g. a *siddha* may will the poison to have the effect of nectar and succeed in bringing about this desired result. A *siddha* is one who is possessed of these *siddhis*.

According to the *Yogasūtra* of Patanjali, "siddhis or perfections proceed from birth or from drugs or from spells or from self-castigation or from concentration."<sup>4</sup> According to the commentator of the *Yogasūtra*, "1. The power of having another body is the perfection by birth; 2. Perfection by drugs is by an elixir-of-life (got) in the mansions of the demons, and the like; 3. By spells, such as the acquisition of the power of passing through space and atomization; 4. Perfection by self-castigation is the perfection of the will, the faculty of taking on any form at will or of going anywhere at will, and so on; 5. Perfections proceeding from concentration have been explained."<sup>5</sup> This last statement refers to the earlier books I-III of the *Yogasūtra* and its *Bhāshya*. Perfections proceeding from concentration are the best perfections. The fact that according to the *Yogasūtra*, *siddhis* or 'perfections' could be attained by 'spells' (*mantras*) and 'drugs' (*aushadhi*) is significant in the context of the study of Tāntrika *yoga* in early medieval India.

That the idea of *siddhis* is associated with *yoga* is clear from the *Yoga-sūtra* and Tāntrika texts. But *siddhis* as magical and supernormal powers are associated also with magic and priestly rituals. This takes us to the Vedic age and the earliest Brāhmanical rituals connected with *yajna* or sacrifice and black magic. In fact, magic has been an important element of human beliefs and practices right from the primitive days of human civilization.<sup>6</sup> It is acknowledged that Vedic cult and ritual has two aspects—religion and magic. Vedic magic “endeavours to gain its ends by influencing the course of events, without the intervention of divine beings, by means of spells and ritual. Its essential character, therefore, is coercive.”<sup>7</sup> The Vedic priest was master magician. He brought down rain by the magical powers of sacrificial craft. In the *Rigveda* the ‘fathers’ are said to have found the hidden light and produced the dawn through ‘mighty spells’. Vishvāmitra is said to have made the rivers fordable by invoking the rivers. According to the *Shatapatha Brāhmana*, it is because of the offering before sunrise made to the sun by the sacrificer that the sun rises which otherwise would not rise! The ‘magicians’ (*yātudhānas*) are mentioned in the *Rigveda*. Modern Indian word ‘*jādū*’ (magic) is a form of Vedic ‘*yātu*’ (sorcery). In the Vedic age there were the hostile magicians who used to become birds and fly about at night. In the *Atharvaveda* Indra is said to have overcome the demons by amulets. In this text a priest says: “I plague the demons as the tiger the cattle-owners.” Rituals were performed for subduing the foe, killing the enemy, winning the love of another’s wife, and so on. *Yajna* or sacrifice had both the aspects—religious and secular. Likewise, *siddhis* were employed for higher as well as lower gains. *Mantras* or spells and charms are a universal feature of the Vedic Brāhmanism including the Upanishadic thought. *Om* is the greatest of Brāhmanical spells which is deified in the Upanishads. In the *Yogasūtra* it is a symbol of God.<sup>8</sup> It is by means of *Om* that the seeker after the Brahman is advised to hit at the goal. Indeed the Vedic *karma-kānda* (sacrificial ritualism), when it was revived in the age of Brāhmanical Purānas and Dharmashāstras (A.D. 600-1200), had greatly contributed to the development of Tāntrikism in Brāhmanical sects of Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Shāktism. The present author has traced briefly the Vedic background of early medieval esoterism and Tāntrikism in another work.<sup>9</sup> The Upanishads clearly describe the supernormal powers which are said to result from the practice of *yoga*.<sup>10</sup> The *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* knows the theory of *siddhis* and some of their types.<sup>11</sup>

Magical practices and ascetic *siddhis* were known to India in the age of the Buddha. The *Dīgha Nikāya* refers to *Gāndhārī-Vijjā* which was a branch of magical learning prevalent in the region of ancient Gāndhāra.<sup>12</sup> The *Dīgha Nikāya* has a *sutta* called *Ātānātiya sutta* which contains charms.<sup>13</sup> The *Mahāvagga* refers to a story of the miraculous powers of the family members of a layman called Mendaka.<sup>14</sup> The *Chullavagga* tells the story of the magical feat of a *bhikshu* called Pindolā Bhāradvāja who rose in the air to get a bowl made of sandal wood. The Buddha rebuked that *bhikshu* because he did not approve of the idea that the monks should show their psychic powers for gaining worldly things.<sup>15</sup> *Dhāranīs* or charms and *mantras* or spells for gaining *siddhi* or success or protection against dangers are known to Pāli and Sanskrit Buddhist texts.<sup>16</sup> We have seen above that persons endowed with *siddhis*, and called *siddhas*, are considered divine or semi-divine beings. Kapila is called the best among the *siddhas*, and Krishna in the *Bhagavadgītā* apparently exalts this sage as a divine one.<sup>17</sup> The present author has elsewhere suggested that Kapila was a historical *shramana* teacher of non-Āryan and non-Brāhmanical cultural stock who may have flourished in the ninth century B. C. He was the founder of the Sāmkhya system of philosophy which was originally a non-theistic and non-Vedic system, though later on included in the list of 'six systems' of the Brāhmanical philosophy. This Kapila, called a great *Rishi* and a great *Muṇi* is famous in Buddhist tradition also.<sup>18</sup> In the *Mahāvastu Avadāna* he is described as having his abode at the foot of the Himālayas, as "a seer endowed with fivefold supersensuous knowledge, a master of four degrees of meditation, possessed of great wondrous powers, and a great-souled one."<sup>19</sup>

In the Buddhist scriptures, both Pāli and Sanskrit, we find detailed discussion of *iddhi* or *riddhi* and of *abhijnā*. The word *riddhi* (Pāli : *iddhi*) means 'to grow, increase, succeed, prosper.' The Pāli word *iddhi* is translated to mean 'virtue', 'potency', 'power.' The four 'bases of or steps to psychic power' (*iddhi-pādas*) are often mentioned in Buddhist texts among the thirty-seven 'limbs' or principles conducive to Enlightenment.<sup>20</sup> The word *abhijnā* has been translated as 'psychic power', 'supernatural faculty of a Buddha', 'transcendent knowledge', or 'supersensuous knowledge.' This knowledge is said to be fivefold or sixfold. The *Mahāvastu* mentions seven types of it. The usual six types of *abhijnā* are<sup>21</sup> : supernal organ of sight ; supernal organ of hearing ; discernment of the thoughts of others ; knowledge of death and birth and



of previous existences; knowledge of working out supersensuous or wondrous actions; and knowledge of the destruction of all impurities. These are the special faculties of an Arhat or a Buddha. The Bodhisattvas progress towards Nirvāna after perfecting these *abhijnās*. The classical Buddhist view, represented by the early Pāli and Sanskrit sources, is that the *siddhi* and *abhijnā*, supernormal perfection and supernormal knowledge, of various kinds result from certain well-regulated *yoga* practices in which concentration and psychophysical discipline play the vital role. These powers and faculties are attained by the sages in the course of their perfection towards the attainment of the highest goal, i.e., Nirvāna. In one sense the Buddhas are the *siddhas*, i.e., liberated ones. The supreme *siddhi* is the attainment of Bodhi or Nirvāna. All the other *siddhis* are inferior to it and are a means to it. But the Buddhas of early Buddhist tradition were not *siddhas* in that sense in which the early medieval *siddhas* were. The *siddhas* of Vajrayāna or of the Nātha sect, who may have flourished during A. D. 800-1200, were 'perfected saints' in the tradition of esoteric culture and *hathayoga*. The doctrines and practices of medieval Indian *siddhas* were very much different from those of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. This difference is noteworthy, but owing to the paucity of space we cannot discuss it here.

In the Brāhmanical tradition, preserved in the *Mahābhārata* and the Purānas, we find mention of *siddhas* called *rishis* or 'seers'. They were also different from the medieval *siddhas* of Hindūistic sects. We have seen that Kapila, a *siddha* of no mean fame, was a non-Brāhmanical sage who stands alone by himself, in spite of his metamorphosis in the Great Epic and the Purānas. His religious position is akin to that of the Tīrthankaras and Arhats of Jainism and Buddhism.

The *Mahābhārata* knows, apart from Kapila, 'seven seers' (*saptarshis*) who are called 'perfected ones' (*siddhas*). They are Bhāradvāja, Kāshyapa, Gautama, Vishvāmītra, Jamadagni, Vasishtha and Atri.<sup>22</sup> They are sometimes called *devarshis*, 'divine seers.' In the *Shabda-kalpadruma* thirty-four *siddhis* are quoted from the *Brahmavaivarta-purāna*. Besides the eight mentioned above, it adds twenty-six more.<sup>23</sup> In this lexicon, the word *siddha* is said to mean 'famous' (*prasiddha*) also. Siddhadeva is a name of Shiva.<sup>24</sup> We know that Shiva is called *siddhishvara*, 'lord of (magical ?) powers.' The *Kālikā-purāna* mentions Siddhakāmeshvarī, a deity in Kāmākhyā or Kāmarūpa (modern lower Āssām). *Pārada* is often called *siddha-dhātu*. The places sanctified by noted ascetics are called *siddha-pītha* or *siddha-kshetra*; e.g., Jālandhara (modern Jullundur)

is associated with Siddha Jālandharapāda. Already in the seventh century A. D. Shriparvata (in Āndhra Pradesh) was famous as a proper seat for obtaining *siddhis*. Bānabhatta was aware of this fame of Shriparvata.<sup>25</sup> Doctrines and practices of the Brāhmanical Tāntrika *siddhas* (Shaiva, Vaishnava, Shākta, Kāpālika, and Pāshupata) occasionally find mention in the literary texts of early medieval India. The Advaita teacher Shamkara (ninth century A.D.) is known in tradition as an expert in Tāntrika *siddhis*. To him is ascribed the authorship of the *Prapanchasāra-tantra* which mentions, among other things, the six 'cruel rites' and the *trailokya-mohana* spell.<sup>26</sup> Shamkarāchārya is said to have written many other Tāntrika texts. But works of unknown authors are also ascribed to him. While his authorship of so many Tāntrika texts is quite doubtful, we can scarcely dissociate him from Brāhmanical (Shaiva-Shakta) Tāntrika movement.<sup>27</sup> There are numerous Brāhmanical texts which mention Tāntrika doctrines and practices of shocking and fearful nature.<sup>28</sup> They are more or less directly derived from Brāhmanical sacrificial ritualism of the Vedic age. Certain Tāntrika and esoteric practices were common to Buddhist and Brāhmanical Tāntrika experts or *siddhas* of medieval India. Some Buddhist texts of Vajrayāna, Sahajayāna and Kālachakrayāna, datable between seventh and twelfth centuries A. D., also described Tāntrika rites and practices.<sup>29</sup> Kalhana, (twelfth century A. D.) refers to *siddhas* and Tāntrika practices in Kashmīr and apparently bewails the depravities of Tāntrikism.<sup>30</sup> It is thus clear that Tāntrika doctrines and practices were common in early medieval India especially in the north and that the *siddhis* and the *siddhas* were associated with them. The word *siddhi* had come to mean success or perfection in *hathayoga*, *mantras* or spells and in *abhichāra* or magic ritual, and the word *siddha* had come to mean an expert in *mantras* or charms and Tāntrika *yoga*. It is held by some very competent authorities that medieval Tāntrika thought-currents ( *tantra* and *hathayoga* ) represent a new climax in Indian spiritual tradition and mysticism.<sup>31</sup>

In early medieval India, from the seventh century A.D. onwards, *siddhas* became popular teachers of a special type of esoteric *yoga*. By virtue of their skill and success in this *yoga* they were called *siddhas*. They were also called *yogins* (or *jogīs*) because they were the masters and teachers, not of the classical ascetic *yoga* (*tapas*, austerities) and meditation of the type of early Jaina, Buddhist, Sāmkhya and Yoga (of Upanishads and *Yogasūtra*), but of *mantra-yoga*, *guhya-yoga*, and *hatha-yoga*. All those who obtained success (*siddhi*) in these practical techniques of communion

or union (*yoga*) were called *siddhas*. This is the meaning, in our opinion, of the word *siddha* in medieval Indian literature. Whether these medieval *siddhas* were also the 'liberated ones' is an altogether different question. We may say, in fairness to the *siddhas*, that according to their system of *tantra* and *hathayoga*, they were 'liberated.' The eighty-four *siddhas* of Tāntrika Buddhism, the *siddhas* of the Nātha tradition, and the non-sectarian *siddhas* of medieval India belonged to this category of *siddhas*.

### YOGA AND YOGINS

The word *yoga*, from the root *yuj*, means the act of yoking, joining, attaching. The word occurs in the *Rigveda* in the sense of yoking or harnessing the horses of a chariot. *Yoga* also means a device, a means, a way, a charm, a supernormal means, an art, etc. Then, again, it means acquisition, gain, opportunity, combination, contact, union, mixture, junction of anything, fitness, propriety, etc.<sup>32</sup> *Yoga* also means care, zeal, and endeavour. Its significant meaning is meditation or concentration (*dhyāna*), abstraction of thought; the system of religious philosophy taught in the *Yogasūtras* of Patanjali (cir. A. D. 300) is called *Yoga*. But *yoga* is a way, usually somewhat ascetic and contemplative way, to spiritual or religious perfection. *Yoga* as a way of moral and spiritual perfection<sup>33</sup> is common to all systems of Indian religious thought, while the *Yoga* system of philosophy attributed to Patanjali (different from the grammarian Patanjali of cir. 200 B.C.) is only one of the many systems of Indian thought.<sup>34</sup>

The idea of *Yoga* in the sense of meditation and ascetic way of life (*samnyāsa*, *pravrajyā*) is very ancient in India. It was of non-Āryan and non-Vedic origin. Its first teachers were *śramanas* and *munis*. Meditation (*dhyāna*) and austerity (*tapas*) were opposed to Vedic and old Brāhmanic thought and culture. The Vedic texts refer to the ascetics called *munis*, *śramanas* and *yatis*, but they also make it clear that their way of life was foreign to Vedic way of life.<sup>35</sup> The world-denying ascetic culture of *munis* and *śramanas*, represented in historic times by the Jainas, the Buddhists, the Sāmkhya system and the early Upanishads (which show influence of *Yoga* and Sāmkhya), was of pre-Vedic and non-Brāhmanic origin.<sup>36</sup>

The origins of *yoga* or meditation and ascetic practice (*tapas*) have been traced to the protohistoric culture of the Punjāb and Sind known as the Indus Valley Civilization or the Harappā Culture. This is proved

beyond doubt by certain sculptured figures of *yogins* or *munis* found among the Indus antiquities.<sup>37</sup>

The Brāhmanical priests of the Vedic period did not approve of the ascetic and *yogic* culture, as is stated clearly in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* and the oldest Dharmasūtras.<sup>38</sup> Even the word *āshrama* does not occur in Vedic texts prior to some post-Buddhist Upanishads.<sup>39</sup> It was due to the influence of Buddhist and Jaina *bhikshus* that the Brāhmanical priests introduced the fourth *āshrama* in their Dharmasūtras probably after the time of Ashoka (300 B.C.). The philosophical system of Yoga of Patanjali (third century A.D.) is based on the techniques of *yoga* known to Buddhism, the Sāmkhya and the early Upanishads. The only non-Buddhist and non-Sāmkhya feature of Patanjali's system is its faint idea of theism, the idea of 'Lord' (*Īshvara*). The Upanishads and the *Mahābhārata* contain a great deal of Buddhist and Sāmkhya influence, although scholars of traditional standpoint do not readily acknowledge this influence. But as A. B. Keith, long ago, pointed out, there is not an iota of evidence to place any event of the oldest Upanishads before the sixth century B.C.

Let us now briefly survey the history of the idea of *yoga* (concentration and its concomitants) in early Brāhmanical and Buddhist literature.

The *Rigveda* (V.81.1) refers to the devotion of mind by wise priests to the god Savitā. Sāyana, commenting on *Rigveda* I.5.3, takes the word *yoga* in the sense of 'acquiring what is not already acquired.' The meaning of the word *yoga* in the Vedic texts prior to the Upanishads is entirely different from its meaning found in post-Vedic texts. The non-Vedic *munis* ('silent ascetics') mentioned in the *Rigveda* (X. 136.2) as *vātaraśhanā* (wind-girt?) were ascetics who practised *yoga*. The *yatis* (ascetics) are said to have been destroyed by Indra. While in old Vedic texts *munis* and *yatis* are said to be hostile or opposed to the Vedic priests, in the old Upanishads these *yatis*, *munis*, and *mundakas* (shaven-headed monks) occupy an important place. According to Hauer, the *vrātyas* of Vedic age were the forerunners of the *yogins*; according to A. B. Keith and A. A. Macdonell, the *munis* of the Rigvedic India were precursors of the historic ascetics of India. In the Vedic age the way of *yoga* (meditation) or *dhyāna* (contemplation) did not flourish due to the predominance of the priestly way of sacrifice (*yajna*) and ritual (*karmakānda*). But in the age of the Buddha and the old Upanishads (700-300 B.C.) the ideas of *tapas*, *yoga* and *dhyāna* or austerity, mind-control and contemplation, found systematic and powerful expression and a great following. In the

age of the Buddha (700-600 B.C.) there were many Brāhmanical and non-Brāhmanical 'ascetics' called *shramanas*, who practised austerities (*tapas*) of diverse kind; there were other *shramanas* who practised different degrees of meditation (*dhyāna*). The Jaina and the Buddhist texts in Prākṛit and Pāli contain repeated references to these wandering monks and ascetics called *parivrājakas*, *tāpasas*, *shramanas*, *bhikshus*, etc.<sup>40</sup> The *Mundakopanishad*, as its name suggests, is a sacred text of shaven-headed monks. In it we find, for the first time in Brāhmanical literature, praise of 'ascetics' (*yatis*), who are said to be "freed from imperfections."<sup>41</sup> These *yatis* are like the Arhats of Buddhist and Jaina traditions. *Kshīna-doshah* of this Upanishad is comparable to *kshīna-āshravāh* of the Buddhist texts.<sup>42</sup> The *Kathopanishad* states the following: "When cease the five sense-knowledges, together with the mind; and the intellect stirs not; that, they say, is the highest course. This they consider as *yoga*—the firm holding back of the senses. Then one becomes undistracted. *Yoga*, truly, is the origin of the end."<sup>43</sup>

Nachiketā is said to have learnt the science (*vidyā*) and procedure of *yoga* (*yoga-vidhi*) from the Death (*Mrityu*) or Yama.<sup>44</sup> This legend means that Nachiketā brought the science and practice of *yoga* in Brāhmanism from some non-Brāhmanical sage who is mystified here as Yama or Mrityu. The Buddha, it must be noted here, is called a 'Demon' in Brāhmanical texts, while a *Dharmasūtra* calls Kapila an *asura* (a demon). These legends point to non-Vedic sources of the *yoga* in Brāhmanism. These non-Vedic sources were the Buddhas and the Tirthankaras who belonged to the tradition of *shramanas* as against those of *brāhmanas*. The word *yoga* occurs in *Taittirīyopanishad* (II. 4 : *yoga-ātman*) where its meaning is doubtful. The *Shvetāshvataropanishad* contains some rules of *yoga* (meditation) and describes its results in a few verses.<sup>45</sup> It says :

When fivefold quality of *yoga* has been produced,  
 Arising from earth, water, fire, air and space,  
 No sickness, no old age, no death has he  
 Who has obtained a body made out of the fire of *yoga*.  
 Lightness, healthiness, steadiness,  
 Clearness of countenance and pleasantness of voice,  
 Sweetness of odour, and scanty excretions—  
 These, they say, are the first stage in the progress of *yoga*.<sup>46</sup>

It is clear from these lines that in this Upanishad *yoga* appears as a way to the realization of God. This idea has influenced the *Bhagavad-gītā* as well as the *Yogasūtra*. But in the phrase 'body made out of the

fire of *yoga*' (*yogāgni-mayam sharīram*) one cannot fail to find the seeds of 'perfected body' (*siddhakāya* or *vajrakāya*) of later day Tantras. The phrase *sāmkhya yoga* occurs in the *Shvetāshvataropaniṣad*, *Mahābhārata*, *Bhagavadgītā*, and the *Padmapurāna*.<sup>47</sup> It stands for two different subjects; *sāmkhya* stands for knowledge and the philosophical system of that name, and *yoga* seems to denote the way of *yoga*, i.e., *dhyāna*, concentration. Many elements of *yoga* as a way and a system of thought are found in the *Bhagavadgītā* and the Upanishads. The *Vedāntasūtra* or *Brāhmasūtra* (II.1.3) seems to refer to the early non-theistic *yoga* system. The *Mundakopaniṣad* refers to austerity (*tapas*); the *Brihadāranyakopaniṣad* (IV.4.22) refers to *munis*; the reference at *Mundakopaniṣad*, II.2.6, may be to *samādhi* but this is not certain.

It may be noted in passing that about twenty Yoga Upanishads, edited by A. Mahādev Sāstrī and published at Adyār (1920), are all very late texts. None of them can be older than tenth century A. D. Shamkarāchārya knew only ten or eleven old Upanishads on which he wrote commentaries.

Diverse are the definitions of *yoga* given in the *Bhagavadgītā*. This is because of the fact that it is a part of that great epic, the *Mahābhārata*, which is the growth of centuries, a heterogeneous compilation of Buddhist and Brāhmanical materials and myths. The present form of the *Mahābhārata* came into existence in *cir.* A. D. 400. But it had started its beginnings from *cir.* 400 B. C. This is the opinion of such eminent authorities as V. S. Sukthankar, R. G. Bhāndārkar, H. Jacobi, M. Winternitz, E. W. Hopkins, A. A. Macdonell and A. B. Keith. The *Shalyaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* narrates the story of *bhikshu* Jaigīshavya who was a great *yogin*. A verse in the *Shāntiparvan* states that "yogins do not talk too much by way of censure and praise of others and their minds are not affected by their praise and censure indulged in by others". This verse is uttered by Jaiagīshavya who is said to have been beyond anger and joy. It may be noted that Jaigīshavya is known to the *Buddhacharita* and flourished in the age of Ārāda Kālāma. The *Mahābhārata* mentions five obstacles in the path of *yoga*.<sup>48</sup> The path of *yoga* is said to be open even to women and the persons of the lowest *varna*.<sup>49</sup> This is clearly a Buddhist influence. It was in Buddhism that the *shūdras* and women were permitted, for the first time in Indian history, to take to monastic life and become *bhikshu* or *bhikshuni* as the case may be. The *Shāntiparvan* also alludes to the Yogic *siddhis*.<sup>50</sup> In the *Mahābhārata* the path of *yoga* is said to be difficult and sharp like the edge of a razor (*kshura-*

*dhārāsu*). This is an echo of the *Kathopanishad* (III.14). At one place it is said that there is no knowledge like the Sāmkhya and no spiritual power like the Yoga.<sup>51</sup> The *Mahābhārata* seems to know the eightfold *yoga* ; though no systematic treatment of *yoga* is given, there are many scattered references to *yoga* in the whole body of the text.<sup>52</sup>

In the opinion of experts the most advanced and subtle techniques of meditation (*dhyāna*, *jnāna*) and contemplation (*samādhi*) are to be found in the Buddhist *yoga*.<sup>53</sup> The founder of Buddhism is called a Muni, Rishi, Shramana, Mundaka, Yati, Yogin, Dhyānī, Jina, Mārajit, etc. ; all these epithets point to his excellence in concentration and conquest of the self and the world. He achieved this conquest by means of *shīla* (morality), *samādhi* (contemplation) and *prajñā* (wisdom). The way of meditation and mindfulness is the core of Buddhist way to Nirvāna. *Smṛiti* (mindfulness), *dhyāna* (concentration), *samādhi* (steadied consciousness), *chitta-yoga* (mind-control) and *nirodha* (restriction) are the words that occur almost on every page of the sacred Buddhist texts.<sup>54</sup> The author of *Yoga-sūtra* (I. 2) defines *yoga* as the restriction (*nirodha*) of the fluctuations of the mind-stuff. Already in Buddhism, Nirvāna is called *nirodha* and the way of mindfulness (meditation) is called the one and the only way (*ekāyano ayam maggo*) to Nirvāna. In Buddhism four degrees of meditation (*dhyāna*) and five states of meditative attainments (*samāpattis*) have been treated in great detail. The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas master these four degrees and five states.<sup>55</sup> All the *siddhis* or perfections issue from the perfections in meditation. Nirvāna is called *yoga-kshema*, the incomparable freedom and the highest bliss. It is by means of *dhyāna* that an Arhat or a Bodhisattva can travel in celestial regions of gods. It is because of his mastery of *dhyāna* and conquest of elements, mental and material, that a Buddha does what he wills and goes wherever he wishes.<sup>56</sup>

*Yoga* in the sense of austerity and asceticism (monasticism) is a basic and integral feature of early Buddhism. The ideal of a Pratyeka-buddha was largely that of a lonely ascetic.<sup>57</sup> There were some Buddhist monks who observed some ascetic practices called *dhūtagunas* or *dhūtangas*. These ascetic practices were thirteen in number : wearing a garment made of rags ; keeping only three robes at a time ; begging alms ; rule of eating at one sitting ; begging from door to door ; rule of eating from one bowl only ; not receiving food twice ; rule of living in the forest ; residing at the foot of a tree ; living in an unsheltered place ; living in or near a cemetery ; spreading a night-couch wherever one happens to be ; and being in a sitting posture while sleeping.<sup>58</sup> These ascetic practices

were not compulsory for all the monks, but they were practised as late as the early medieval period in India.<sup>59</sup> 'In the Buddhist view purity was largely mental rather than physical.'<sup>60</sup> With the growth of Mahāyāna Buddhism, ascetic tendencies in Buddhism began to decline; the Mahāyāna emphasized the ideal of a Bodhisattva, a holy being, devoted to altruistic perfections, and aiming at the Enlightenment of all the living creatures.<sup>61</sup> *Dhyāna* and *samādhi* continued to occupy a basic position in the Mahāyāna, but social virtues and philosophical theories also became more and more important.

A new *yoga* or mystical culture developed in the Buddhist quarters towards the age of Harsha (A. D. 606-644) and Hiuen Tsang. This is called Esoteric Buddhism or Tāntrika Buddhism. Mantrayāna, Vajrayāna, Sahajayāna and Kālachakrayāna were the sects or rather varieties of Tāntrika Buddhism. These sects developed in India during the period from A. D. 400 to 1200. *Mantras*, *dharanīs*, *stotras*, spells, protective charms and hymns of praise to Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and other gods and goddesses became very popular in Buddhism during this age. The *tantra* is a system of *sādhanā* and *siddhi*; it is a kind of *yoga* and a way to spiritual perfection.<sup>62</sup> Its teachers are called *siddhas* or Perfected Ones; they are also called *yogins*, those who had attained the highest union (*yoga*). Buddhist tradition knows eighty-four *yogins* or *siddhas* who flourished during A. D. 800-1200. The *yoga* of these Tāntrika *yogins* is variously called *vajrayoga*, *sahajayoga*, *guhayoga* and *anuttarayoga*. This was a mixture of mysticism and *hathayoga*; it was a world-affirming and non-dualistic philosophy.

The *Bhagavadgītā* calls itself 'a book on *yoga*' (*Yogashāstra*), and the words *yoga* and *yogin* occur in it many a time. At one place, *yoga* is said to be 'even-mindedness'; at another place, *yoga* is defined as 'skill in action.'<sup>63</sup> A *muni* and a man of steadied wisdom is said to be free from passion, fear and wrath and undisturbed by miseries and having no longing for joys.<sup>64</sup> A person of controlled mind and subdued senses is called a *muni* (ascetic);<sup>65</sup> the path of knowledge is called *jnānayoga*; the path of action is called *karmayoga*;<sup>66</sup> *karmayoga* without attachment is said to be *nishkāma karmayoga*. *Yoga-samsiddhi* (perfection in *yoga*) is a way to God-realization. Renunciation of actions (*samnyāsa*) and performance of actions (*karmayoga*) are both good ways to reach liberation; but of the two, the former is better; a person free from likes and dislikes and from the pairs of opposites is the true *samnyāsī*. Sāmkhya and Yoga both are said to be identical.<sup>67</sup> The virtues and



powers of a *yogin* or *muni* and the details of the way of *yoga* are discussed at length again and again.<sup>68</sup> *Yogin* is said to be superior to a *tapasvin*, a man of learning, and a ritualist (VI. 46). That purity is to be judged as good or evil on the basis of the intention behind it was one of the central teachings of the Buddha. The ideal of a *karmayogī* is apparently based upon the ideal of a Bodhisattva.

The theory that *yoga* is of divine origin is founded on late priestly myths of Purānic Brāhmanism and is not trustworthy.<sup>69</sup> We have seen that *yoga*, in the sense of meditation and asceticism, is of pre-Vedic non-Āryan Indian origin. In Purānic Brāhmanism all forms of Vedic and non-Vedic cultures were mixed and amalgamated in the course of time. One of such mixed cultures is the system of Patanjali expounded in his *Yogasūtras* which cannot be dated before *cir.* A. D. 300. *Yoga* is defined in this text as 'the restriction of the fluctuations of mind-stuff' (I. 21; Woods, *op. cit.*, p.8). *Yoga* is further said to be eightfold : 1. abstentions, 2. observances, 3. postures, 4. regulations of the breath, 5. withdrawal of the sense organs, 6. fixed attention, 7. contemplation, and 8. concentration.<sup>70</sup> The text and its commentaries discuss at length the five *yamas*, five *niyamas*, and other limbs of *yoga*. One recalls here the eightfold noble path of Buddhism.<sup>71</sup> Perfection of concentration (*samādhi*) is said to result from devotion to God (*Ishvara*).<sup>72</sup> The third chapter of the *Yogasūtra* dwells on the different powers and virtues (*vibūtis*) that result from successful *yoga* (mind-control), while the second chapter details the procedure or means of attaining success in *yoga*. The first chapter deals with concentration, while the last and fourth deal with spiritual salvation (*kaivalya*).

The medieval Indian Hathayoga is connected more with Tāntrika mysticism and less with any other theory and practice of classical Indian *yoga*. Attainment of liberation is the aim in the system of Patanjali, while the main purpose of Hathayoga is to awaken *kundalinī*. According to the Pāshupata Shaivas, *yoga* is the *union* of individual soul with Universal Soul. According to the Pāncharātra *āgamas*, *yoga* is devotion to God. According to the Vajrayāna, *yoga* is the union of *prajñā* ('wisdom') and *upāya* ('means'). According to the Hathayogins, *yoga* is the union of *Pingalā* and *Idā nādīs*. In the cryptic or esoteric language of the *Tantras* the union of 'male' and 'female', 'father' and 'mother', '*yogin*' and '*yogini*' is called *yoga*. The Ultimate Reality is said to be innate (*sahaja*), monistic (*advaya*), of the nature of 'great delight' (*mahāsukha*) and is often conceived in terms of the 'union' (called *yoga*, *sāmarāśya*,

*yuganaddha, yab-yum, prajnopāya, bodhichitta, shūnyasamādhī, tādātmya, mahānirvāna, siddhi*, etc.) of Shiva and Shakti, Kāla and Kālī, Bhagavān and Bhagavatī, 'husband' and 'wife', Avalokiteshvara and Tārā, etc. These or similar and many other cognate words of esoteric import are found in the Tantras, Āgamas, Yāmālas, Yoga-Upanishads, Samhitās of the Pāncharātra and other 'sacred' texts of the Buddhists (Vajrayāna, Sahajayāna, Kālachakrayāna sects), of the Brāhmanical Hindūs (Shaivas, Kaulas, Pāshupatas, Shāktas, Pāncharātras, Nāthas), in the songs and hymns of Kabīr, Gurū Nānak and other medieval mystics.

Hathayoga literally means 'violent union' or 'union through oppression.' *Hatha* means force, violence, coercion, oppression. *Hathayoga* may also be rendered as 'absolute union' or 'inevitable perfection.' In a sacred text of the Nātha sect, the *Siddha-siddhānta-paddhati*, *hathayoga* is defined thus: *ha* stands for the sun (or *prāna* or the *pingalā nādī*), *tha* stands for the moon (*apāna* or the *idā nādī*); the union of these two (i.e. of *pingalā* and *idā nādīs* or of the winds that pass through these *nādīs*) is called *hathayoga*. According to another text of the Nātha sect, the *Hathayoga-pradīpikā*, *hathayoga* and *rājayoga* are complementary to each other.<sup>73</sup> It should be kept in mind that *hathayoga* expounded in such works as the *Gorakshashataka*, *Hathayoga-pradīpikā*, *Siddha-siddhānta-paddhati*, etc., is a system different from the *Aishvarika-yoga* of Patanjali's *Yogasūtras*. Some modern writers talk of many kinds of *yoga* such as *bhaktiyoga*, *rājayoga*, *mantrayoga*, *karmayoga*, *jnānayoga*, *hathayoga*, etc. We have seen that the *Bhagavadgītā* itself uses some of these terms. *Hathayoga* is also called *kundalinīyoga*. The Yoga-Upanishads treat not only *hathayoga*, *mantrayoga* and *rājayoga* but also *layayoga*.<sup>74</sup> Except *hathayoga* (*kundalinīyoga*) all the other so-called kinds of *yoga* usually refer to Patanjali's system of *yoga* which is both devotional and theistic. But the Buddhist Tantras refer to their own culture as *vajrayoga*, *sahajayoga* and *anuttarayoga*.

According to the *Hathayogapradīpikā*, *āsana* (posture) is the first limb of *hathayoga*, that Shiva taught eighty-four *āsanas* of which *siddha*, *padma*, *simha* and *bhadra āsanās* are the foremost. The text describes fifteen *āsanas*.<sup>75</sup> The *Shivasamhitā* and the *Gherandasamhitā* state that there are eighty-four *āsanas*, but the *Gorakshashataka* and the *Dhyāna-bindūpanishad* state that their number is endless.<sup>76</sup> The *hathayoga* seeks to concentrate on the discipline of the body, its health, purity and freedom from disease. The six processes (*kriyās*) of *hathayoga* like washing (*dhauti*) and shaking the abdomen<sup>77</sup> are unknown to Patanjali's *sūtras*.

Besides the eight *angas* (limbs) of Patanjali's *yoga*, the *hatha-yoga* deals with *mudrās* like *Khecharī*, *Jālandhara*, *Uddiyānā*, *Mūlabandha*, *Vajroli*, *Amroli*, etc. According to the *Hathayoga-pradīpikā*, the first teacher of this *yoga* was Shiva called 'Ādinātha'; then it was propagated by *siddhas* like Matsyendranātha, Gorakshanātha, and others.<sup>78</sup> This point of information should be noted because it traces the origin of *Hathayoga* not to Vishnu or Hiranyagarbha as is done in the *Mahābhārata* but to Shiva or Rudra, a deity originally of non-Āryan origin.

#### NĀTHA AND THE NĀTHA SECT

The words such as *nāthate*, 'seeks aid', *nāthishyati*, 'to beg for, to request for', *nāthayati*, 'causes a person to ask for anything', etc., occur in the later Vedic texts and the *Mahābhārata*. It is well known that the first teacher of Jainism is called Rishabhanātha or Ādinātha; the twenty-third teacher is called Pārshvanātha. In later times many personal names ending in 'nātha' are known, e.g., Matsyendranātha, Gorakshanātha, etc. The two famous temples in Kāthmāndū are called Svayambhūnātha, a Buddhist sanctuary, and Pashupatinātha, a Shiva temple. Nāthānandamuni is known to be the name of an author. Shiva is called Pashupatinātha or Ādinātha. The split-ear (*kānphat*) *yogins*, the followers of Gorakshanātha (Gorakhnātha) are called *nāthas* and their sect, the Nātha sect.<sup>79</sup>

The word *nātha* means helper, refuge, protector, patron, husband, owner, lord, master, etc. The word *nātha*, its variants and verbs are found in the Vedic literature. The usage of the word *nātha* as an epithet of the followers of Nātha sect associated with the Siddha Goraksha or Gorakshanātha is of medieval date. The dates of Matsyendranātha and Gorakshanātha are very controversial, but they are generally placed between ninth and eleventh centuries A.D.

It needs no assertion to say that, as an epithet of the ascetic teachers of the school of *Hathayogins*, the word *nātha* is of a late origin as compared to the words *yogin* and *siddha*, which epithets of ascetics are known to remote antiquity. The Nātha sect originated with Matsyendra and Goraksha in about the ninth and tenth centuries A.D., although, as we have seen above, the original teacher of Hathayoga, associated with Nāthas, is said to be the great god Shiva.<sup>80</sup> This theistic feature of the Nātha sect of medieval India is due to Shaiva influence. The sect has a tradition of nine Nāthas beginning with Matsyendranātha (Machhindra-, Macchaghna, identified with Jālandharanātha). They are called

*yogins*. They are also called *siddhas*.

The texts of the *Nātha* sect prove that the *siddhas* are called *yogins* as well as *nāthas*. There is no important reason for making a difference and distinction between the words *siddha*, *yogin*, *avadhūta* and *nātha* in the context of medieval Indian devotional mysticism. The differences are to be found in certain aspects of the doctrines and practices of the different groups of *siddhas*, *yogins* and *nāthas*, and these differences are due to the differences between the religious systems to which they belonged, i.e., Buddhism, Shaivism, Shāktism, Vaishnavism, Pātanjala-yoga and Hathayoga. Thus the eighty-four *siddhas* of Vajrayāna and Sahajayāna belonged to the tradition of Mahāyāna Buddhism; all of them are called great *yogins*, experts in *yoga*, and some of them had their names ending in *nātha*. Likewise the *yogins* of the mixed tradition of Hathayoga and Shaivism are called *siddhas*, *avadhūtas* as well as *nāthas*. Then, there may have been some 'independent' *yogins* or *siddhas* who were neither Buddhist nor Brāhmanical but were 'lords' (*nāthas*) in their own right. In the same way, there were some devotees (*bhaktas*) who were called *yogins* because they sought union (*yoga*) with God; they were also called *nāthas* because they begged for<sup>81</sup> or asked for the favour (*prasāda*) of God. However, in recent times it has become customary to take the word *nātha* in the sense of a follower of Gorakshanātha.

#### EIGHTY-FOUR BUDDHIST SIDDHAS

Tārānātha, the Tibetan historian, says that during the time of the Pāla kings of Bengāl many *siddhāchāryas* appeared and diffused the Tāntrika teachings after the time of the philosopher Dharmakīrti.<sup>82</sup> He gives the following succession of these *siddhas* or *siddhāchāryas*: (1) Mahāchārya Brāhmana Rāhulābhadrā (he revealed for the first time the *Mahāmudrā* and later on became known as Saroha or Saraha); (2) Nāgārjuna; (3) Siddha Savarī, also known as 'Younger Saroha'; (4) Luīpāda; (5) Dombī; (6) Tillī; (7) Nāro; (8) Younger Dombī; and (9) Kushalībhadrā.

An entirely different list of succession of early *siddhas* is given in the Tibetan *Tenjūr* which is given below: (1) Padmavajra; (2) Anangavajra; (3) Indrabhūti; (4) Bhagavatī Lakshamī; (5) Līlavajra; (6) Dārikapā; (7) Sahajayoginī Chintā; and (8) Dombī-Heruka. Two most important *siddhas*, viz., Saraha and Nāgārjunapāda, it is to be noted, are not mentioned in this group of early *siddhas*.<sup>83</sup>

The third Tibetan tradition, preserved in the work of Sumpa-mkhan-po, gives the following list of early *siddhas*: (1) Saraha; (2) Nāgārjuna; (3) Sabaripā; (4) Luīpā; (5) Vajraghanta; (6) Kacchapa; (7) Jālandharipā; (8) Krishnāchārya; (9) Guhya; (10) Vijayapā; (11) Tailapā; and (12) Nāropā. It will be observed that many names are common to the lists of Tārānātha and Sumpa. Secondly, in Tārānātha as well as in Sumpa, Saraha *alias* Rāhulabhadra is at the head of the list of these *siddhas*.

In the *Blue Annals*, an early Tibetan history of Buddhism, are mentioned at several places a large number of *siddhas*. A certain king Pradyotachandra is credited to have first obtained the *Yoga-tantras* in the east. After him are placed Nāgārjuna and his disciples who introduced the *Guhyasamāja* and other *Mahāyoga-tantras*. Then comes Shrikambala who introduced *Yoginī-tantras* from Uddīyāna. After that the Bodhisattvas (here Bodhisattvas means the kings of Sambhala) introduced the *Kālachakra* and other Tantras from Sambhala. Among these "Bodhisattvas" of Sambhala were king Indrabhūti, his sister Lakshamīnkarā, and his son, Padmasambhava, as we shall see below.

The author of the *Blue Annals* feels that the *Kālachakra* system had appeared in the *Āryadesha* (i.e. India) earlier than is usually believed. According to him, the chronological succession of the line of *āchāryas* of the *Kālachakra* system is as follows: (1) Mahāsiddha Vajraghantapāda; (2) Kūrmāpāda; (3) Vijayapāda; (4) Krishnapāda; (5) Bhadrāpāda; (6) Vijayapāda; (7) Tillipā or Tailipā and (8) Nāropā. "Thus from Ghanta(pāda) till Nāropā there have been eight teachers in the line." Nāropā's son was Kālachakrapāda.

It seems that there were several lines of teachers, or *Āmnāyas*, i.e., mystic schools of the Tāntrika Buddhists. Some *siddhas* belonging to a particular branch of mysticism may have been contemporaneous with those belonging to other branch. This seems to be inferable from the fact that the *Blue Annals* enumerate groups of *gurūs* or different *guruparamparās*. Thus as many as "fifty-four *siddhas*, males and females," appear as belonging to different branches of Tāntrika Buddhism, although they were, perhaps, contemporaries also. Members of one branch are: (1) Vāgīshvara, (2) Buddhagupta, (3) Godhāri, (4) Karma-vajra, (5) Javāri, (6) Jnānapāda, (7) Nāgabodhi, (8) Ānanda, (9) Krishnapāda, (10) Vasudharma, and (11) Padmavajra. These teachers belonged to the lineage of the 'Father' class of Tantras, and seem to have been all teachers of a great soul (*siddheshvara*), Dam-pa by name, a

native of Be-ba-la in South India.

Another line of teachers belonging to the 'Mother' class of Tantras is as follows : (1) Anangavajra, (2) Saroruha, (3) Indrabhūti, (4) Dombhīpā, (5) Vajraghanta, (6) Tillipā, (7) Krishnapā, (8) Lilāvajra, (9) Luī-pā, (10) Virūpā, (11) Ānandagarbha, and (12) Kukkurīpā. It is noticeable that in this last list are several persons belonging to the list given by Tārānātha and Sumpa.

Dr Giuseppe Tucci brought to light some interesting details concerning the *siddhas* given in a Nepālese palm-leaf manuscript discovered by him. This *Biography of Siddhas*, is unfortunately very fragmentary and cannot be of much help in settling the complicated and confused history and chronology of the *siddhas*. This *Biography of the Siddhas* ( in Sanskrit ) shows that a Nāgārjuna, who was an alchemist, was a contemporary of Shabara and Advayavajra ( also called Dāmodara and Maitrigupta ). This work thus points to a different line of teachers, which claimed Nāgārjuna as its head.

Pandit Rāhula Sāmkrityāyana reconstructed the genealogy and chronology of the *siddhas* on the basis of the *Chaturashīti-Siddha-Pravritti*, preserved in the Tibetan *Tenjur*, and supplemented his account by other Tibetan sources.

The historicity of the eighty-four *siddhas* or Perfect Ones of Tāntrika Buddhism is indicated not only by a number of Indian and Tibetan legends and traditions but also by some historical references to them. Besides the works of Tārānātha and Sumpa and the *Blue Annals*, the *Chaturashīti-Siddha-Pravritti* and the Sanskrit *Biography* mentioned above, many other Tibetan works written after the time of Bu-ston and before that of the Sumpa-mkhan-po also refer to their life and works. The *Shābaratantra* gives a list of twenty-four teachers of the Kāpālika sect, and Nāgārjuna, Minanātha, Goraksha, Charpata and Jālandhara are included in the list. We know from other sources that these are included among the eighty-four *śiddhas* also. These eighty-four *siddhas* are also well known to the literature of medieval Indian Chemistry and Alchemy. The poet and mystic, Kaḃīr, of the fifteenth century refers to them in one of his songs. Repeated references to *siddhas* are found in the work of Gurū Nānak. Charpata and Lohārīpā are mentioned in the *Sidh-goshti* and Gorakh in the *Japu*. Some of these are mentioned in the literature of the Nātha school. A fourteenth century writer, Jyotirīshvara, also mentions them in his *Varnaratnākara*. A few *siddhas* are mentioned in some inscriptions also. A large number

of them are known from their Tāntrika works : *Sādhanas*, *Dohās*, and commentaries, extant in Tibetan, Sanskrit and Apabhramsha.

The list of Siddhas, as preserved in the Tibetan sources, is as follows : (1) Luhī-pā, (2) Lilā-pā, (Virū-pā), (4) Dombī-pā, (5) Shabara (Shavari-pā), (6) Saraha (Rāhulabhadra), (7) Kankāli-pā, (8) Mīna-pā, (9) Goraksha-pā, (10) Chaurangī-pā, (11) Vīnā-pā, (12) Shānti-pā, (13) Tanti-pā, (14) Charmāri (Chamari-pā), (15) Khadga-pā, (16) Nāgārjuna, (17) Kānha-pā, (18) Karnari-pā, (Āryadeva), (19) Thagana-pā, (20) Nāro-pā (Nadapāda), (21) Sālī-pā (Sargala-pāda), (22) Tilo-pā (Tailika-pāda), (23) Chhatra-pā, (24) Bhadra-pā, (25) Dvikhandī-pā (Do-khandhī-pā), (26) Ajogi-pā, (27) Kada-pāda (Kāla-pā), (28) Dhovi-pā, (29) Kankana-pā, (30) Kampala-pā (Kambala), (31) Genji-pā (Tenki-pā), (32) Bhade-pā, (33) Tandhi-pā, (34) Kukhuri-pā, (35) Chuḷbi (Kusuli-pā), (36) Dharma-pā, (37) Mahi-pā, (38) Achinti-pā, (39) Bhalaha-pā, (40) Nalina-pā, (41) Bhūsuku-pā, (42) Indrabhūti, (43) Megha-pā (Meko-po), (44) Kuthāli-pā (Kuthāri), (45) Karmara-pā, (46) Jālandhara-pā, (47) Rāhula-pā, (48) Garbhari-pā, (49) Dhakari-pā, (50) Jogī-pā, (51) Celuka-pā, (52) Gundari-pā, (53) Luncaka-pā, (54) Nirguna-pā, (55) Jayānanda-pā, (56) Charpati-pā, (57) Champaka-pā, (58) Bhikhan-pā, (59) Bhali-pā, (60) Kumāri-pā, (61) Chavari (Javāri-pā), (62) Manibhadrā (*yoginī*), (63) Mekhalā-pā (*yoginī*), (64) Mankhalā-pā (*yoginī*), (65) Kalakala-pā, (66) Kanthali-pā, (67) Dhahuli-pā, (68) Udhāli-pā, (69) Kapāla-pā, (70) Kīla-pā, (71) Sāgara-pā (Pushkara), (72) Sarvabhaksha-pā, (73) Nāgabodhi-pā, (74) Dārika-pā, (75) Putūli-pā, (76) Upānaha-pā, (77) Kokila-pā, (78) Ananga-pā, (79) Lakshamīkarā (*yoginī*), (80) Samudra-pā, and (81) Vyāli-pā (Bhali-pā), etc.

#### BRĀHMANICAL AND NĀTHA SIDDHAS

Traditional lists of *siddhas* are found in some non-Buddhist works especially in the texts connected with the Nātha sect and some allied Brāhmanical schools of medieval India. The *siddhas* of medieval India belonged to such a mixed religious tradition that it is not always correct to refer to them either as Buddhist *siddhas* or as Brāhmanical *siddhas* or as Nātha *siddhas*. There is considerable confusion in the different lists of lineage of these *siddhas*. Some names are doubtless common to the list of so-called Buddhist *siddhas* and the so-called Nātha *siddhas*. While a good number of names of *siddhas* in these lists seem to be entirely mythical, the historicity of about ninety *siddhas* is more or less quite certain.

The *Hathayoga-Pradīpikā* gives a list of the following Nātha *siddhas* : (1) Ādinātha (Shiva), (2) Matsyendranātha, (3) Shābara, (4) Ānanda-Bhairava, (5) Chaurangī, (6) Mīnanātha, (7) Gorakshanātha, (8) Virūpāksha, (9) Bileshaya, (10) Manthāna Bhairava, (11) Siddhabodha (Siddhi), (12) Buddha, (13) Kanhadinātha, (14) Korantakanātha, (15) Surnanda, (16) Siddhapāda, (17) Charpatinātha, (18) Kānerinātha, (19) Pūjyapāda, (20) Nityanātha, (21) Niranjananātha. (22) Kapālinātha, (23) Bindunātha, (24) Kakachandīshvara, (25) Attama, (26) Prabhudeva, (27) Ghodācholinātha, (28) Tintininātha, (29) Bhānukin, (30) Nāradeva, (31) Khanda, (32) Kāpālīka, etc.<sup>84</sup>

It is needless to say that about half of these names seem to be fanciful.

In the *Shābaratantra* twelve 'teachers' of Kāpālīka sect of Shaivism, such as Ādinātha, Anādi, Kāla, Atikāla, Karāla, Vikarāla Mahākāla, Kālabhairava, Vatukanātha, etc., seem to be mythical, usually epithets of Shiva. But the following twelve teachers have something historical around their names : Nāgārjuna, Jadabharata, Harīshachandra, Satyanātha, Bhīmanātha, Goraksha, Charpata, Avadya, Vairāgī, Kanthadhārī, Jālandhara, and Malayārjuna.

Dr Hazārī Prasād Dvivedī has collected about 137 names of *siddhas* belonging to different traditions.<sup>85</sup> But it is difficult to write a systematic and chronological account of all the *siddhas* known to several traditions.

The Nātha sect cherishes the tradition that there had been nine Nāthas, but it is almost impossible to prepare an authentic list of these nine 'lords' of the Nātha sect. There are many lists of these teachers but they do not agree with each other. A legend in the modern work called *Yogisampradāyāvishkriti* tells us that the nine forms of Nārāyana became incarnate in the forms of nine Nāthas. In this legend the Nāthas are deified, a fact known to Gurū Nānak who refers to Gorakh along with Brahmā, Shiva, Pārvatī, Māi, etc. In this list the nine Nāthas are the following : Matsyendranātha; Gahaninātha, Jvālendranātha, Karanīpanātha, Nāganātha (?), Charapatanātha, Revānātha, Bhartrinātha, and Gopīchandranātha. It is noteworthy that Gorakhnāth does not figure in this list and Nāganātha's identity is doubtful.

Dr Hazārī Prasād Dvivedī has drawn our attention to two lists of nine *nāthas*. The first of these is based on the *Sudhākara-chandrikā*, and is as follows : Ekanātha, Ādinātha, Matsyendranātha, Udayanātha, Dandanātha, Satyanātha, Santoshanātha, Kūrmanātha, and Jālandharanātha. The second list is said to be based on a Nepālese tradition and is as follows : Prakāsha, Vimasa, Ānanda, Jnāna, Satya, Pūrna, Svābha,



Pratibha, and Subhaga. There is no reason to believe that all these are names of historical *nāthas*.

Mention may be made of the fact that Jnānadeva in his commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā* called *Jnāneshvarī* mentions at the end of his work his lineage of teachers in the following order : Ādinātha, Matsyendra-nātha, Gorakshanātha, Gahininātha, Nivrīttinātha, and Jnānadeva. Jnānadeva was a Vaishnava devotee but in his work the *siddhas* of Shaiva-Nātha tradition are claimed as *gurūs* by him. The poet, however, also refers to the legend of eighty-four *siddhas* and gives a list of only seventy-six *siddhas*. The remaining eight names were probably omitted due to mistake; some of the names given in this list are known to the Tibetan list of Vajrayāna *siddhas*, but many new and fanciful names also occur.<sup>86</sup>

In early medieval India the Siddha tradition flourished along with other religious traditions. Tantras became the authentic scriptures alongside the scriptures based on Vedic tradition. Kullūka Bhatta, a commentator of the *Manusmṛiti*, mentions *shruti* as twofold : *Vaidika* and *Tāntrika*. The *Lālitāsahasranāma*, a Tāntrika text, tells us that the spiritual tradition is threefold and accordingly the teachers are also of three kinds : divine (*divya*), perfected ones (*siddhas*) and human (*mānava*). In myths and legends human teachers were often given divine status and were worshipped as divinities. Thus the author of the *Panchatantra* invokes the blessings not only of gods like Shiva, Brahmā, Indra, etc., but also of the *siddhas*. Alberūnī also mentions the fact that the *Siddhas* along with *Rishis* and *Munis*, deified and mythologized, were supposed to live along with the semi-divine beings like Gandharvas. He refers to *siddhas* like Nāgārjuna and Vyālī who were experts in alchemy. According to Alberūnī, "Siddha is he who has attained by his action the faculty to do in the world whatever he likes, but who does not aspire further and does not exert himself on the path leading to liberation."<sup>87</sup>

The *Sarvadarshana-samgraha* of Mādhavāchārya (14th century A. D.) has a chapter on what it calls the *Raseshvara* system. This was a Shaiva system also called *Māheshvara*. It was a mixture of Shaiva theology and Tāntrika alchemy. The text states that many gods, demi-gods, demons and human beings attained a perfect body through the practice of the *yoga* of *pārada* (Shiva) and *abharaka* (Shakti). Among other mythical names, the text mentions the names of some historical *siddhas* such as Kapila, Charavati, Vyālī, Kapālī, etc.<sup>88</sup>

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, reprinted, Oxford, 1964, p. 1216.
2. *Prapanchasāratantra*, XIX.62-63 (ed. by Arthur Avalon, *Tāntrik Texts*, vol. XVIII, 1935).
3. *Yogasūtra-bhāṣhya*, III. 1-55 ; see J. H. Woods, *The Yoga System of Patanjali* (HOS, vol. XVII), reprinted, Delhi. 1966, pp. 202 ff.
4. J. H. Woods, *op.cit.*, p. 299; *Yogasūtra*, IV.1.
5. J. H. Woods, *op. cit.*, p. 299.
6. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (=ERE), ed. James Hastings, vol. VIII, article on 'Magic.'
7. A. A. Macdonell on 'Vedic Magic' in ERE, vol. VIII, pp. 311-312; see also A. B. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, vol. I (HOS, vol. 31), p. v.
8. *Māndukyopanishad*, 1 and 8 ; *Taittiriyopanishad*, 1. 8 ; *Yogasūtra*, 1.27.
9. L. M. Joshi, *Studies in the Buddhistic Culture of India* (during the 7th and 8th centuries A. D.) (=Buddhistic Culture), Delhi, 1967, pp. 305-307; cf. also L. M. Joshi, 'Protohistoric Origins of Esoterism in India,' *Proceedings of the XXVI Session of the Indian History Congress*, Rānchī, 1964.
10. L. M. Joshi, *Buddhistic Culture*, pp. 311, 327-28 ; L. M. Joshi, 'Original Homes of Tāntrika Buddhism,' *Journal of the Oriental Institute*, vol. XVI, No. 3, Barodā, 1967.
11. *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra*, II. 9, 23. 6-7.
12. L. M. Joshi, *Buddhistic Culture*, pp. 311, 327-28.
13. *Dīgha Nikāya*, vol. III, p. 150 (Nālandā ed.). This text also mentions 'arts' like *Bhūtavijjā*, *Visavijjā*, etc.
14. *Mahāvagga*, VI. 34.1 f. ; *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. XVII.
15. *Chullavagga* in *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. XX, pp. 78 f. ; see R. E. Hume, 'Miracles in the Canonical Scriptures in Buddhism' in *Journal of American Oriental Society* (=JAOS), vol. 44, pp. 162 ff.
16. For details, see L. M. Joshi, *Buddhistic Culture*, pp. 309-12, 357-59.
17. *Bhagavadgītā*, X. 26.
18. L. M. Joshi, 'The Heritage of Kapilavastu,' in *The Mahā Bodhi*, vol. 75, No. 3, Calcuttā, 1967, pp. 85-87.
19. *Mahāvastu Avadāna*, edited by R. G. Basak, vol. I, Calcuttā, 1963, p. 457. The city of Kapilavastu (Kapilavasthu, Kapilāvata, Kapilātirtha) in the Nepālese tarāī, the home town of Siddhārtha Gautama the Buddha ( 624-544 B. C. ), was founded by the followers of Kapilamuni and hence named after him. In the *Mahābhārata* and the Purānas, this Kapila, deified and mystified, plays many parts in many legends. But like the Yoga, the Sāmkhya, Jainism and Buddhism, this great teacher originally belonged to the non-Vedic and non-Brahmanic

tradition of India. In the *Bhāgavata-purāna*, II. 7, Kapila figures among the 22 *avatāras*. In the *Mahābhārata*, III. 3. 24 and III. 47. 18, Kapila is a name of the sun and Vishnu. In the *Sāmkhyakārikā* he is the acknowledged founder of that system. See also R. Garbe on Kapila, Yoga and Sāmkhya in *ERE*, vol. VII, p. 659 ; vol. XII, p. 831 and vol. XI, p. 189.

20. See *Dharma-samgraha*, section 46 ; cf. Har Dayāl, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*, London, 1937, pp. 104-106.
21. *Dharma-samgraha*, section 20—*divya-chakshu*, *divya-shrotra*, *parachittajnāna*, *pūrva-nivāsānusrīti*, *ridhī*. The sixth, omitted here, is *āsraya-kshaya-jnāna*.
22. *Mahābhārata*, I. 123. 50 ; *Harivamsha*, verse 141, 48. On 'seven seers' (*sapta rishis*) and other *Rishis*, *Devarshis*, *Brahmarshis*, *Rajarshis* of Brāhmanical mythology, see E. Washburn Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, reprinted, Delhi, 1968, pp. 176 ff., 178 ff. The said seven seers are clearly called *siddhas* in the Epic. On Kapila see Sorensen's *Index to the Mahābhārata*, Delhi, 1963, p. 382.
23. *Shabdakalpadruma* of Rājā Rādhākāntadeva, vol. V, Delhi (reprinted), 1961, p. 350.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 349-350.
25. See L. M. Joshī in *Journal of the Oriental Institute*, vol. XVI, No. 3, Barodā, 1967, pp. 226-228 ; *Buddhistic Culture*, pp. 323 ff.
26. *Prapanchasāratantra*, XXIII.5.
27. See Baladeva Upādhyāya, *Shrī Shamkarācārya*, second ed., Allāhābād, 1963. This biography of Shamkara is largely based on late medieval sources and legends and should be used with caution.
28. See *Shaktisamāgama-tantra* (*Kālikhanda*), VIII. 102-105 ; *Agni-purāna*, chapter 138 ; *Jayakhyasamhitā*, XXVI. 24 ; *Shāradātilaka*, XXIII. 121-145 ; *Mantra-mahodadhi*, chapter 25 ; *Prapanchasāra*, XXIII. 5 ; *Matsya-purāna*, 93. 148-155 ; earlier sources—*Taittirīya Samhitā*, I.4.4.5 ; *Taittirīya Brāhmana*, II.6. 6.3 ; Jaimini's *Mīmānsāsūtra*. The five *tattvas* or 'sacraments' of Hindū Tāntrikism are listed in many Hindū texts. See *Shaktisamāgama-tantra* (*Tārā-khanda*), chapter 36, verses 18-20 ; *Pārānandasūtra* (GOS), pp. 1-3 ; *Kulāranava-tantra*, II. 7-8 ; *Mahānirvānatāntra*, VII. 97-98 ; *Kaulāvalinirnaya*, IV. 24-28 etc. These five sacraments are called *pancha-makāras*. They are 1. 'wine' 2. 'sexual intercourse' 3. 'woman' 4. 'meat' and 5. 'fish'.
29. See L. M. Joshī, *Buddhistic Culture*, chapters X-XI ; B. Bhattāchārya, *Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*, Oxford University Press, 1932 ; S. B. Dāsgupta, *An Introduction to Tāntric Buddhism*, 2nd ed., Calcuttā, 1958. The representative Buddhist Tāntrika texts of Vajrayāna and Sahajayāna are the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*, ed. in GOS, Barodā, 1928 and again in BST series, Darbhanga, 1963, and the *Havajratāntra*, ed. in LOS, London, 1959.
30. *Rājataranginī*, VI. 66 ; see L. M. Joshī in the *History of the Punjab*, vol. III (1000-1526 A. D.), chapter XIV, Patialā, 1971, Punjabī University.
31. This is the view of Dr Heinrich Zimmer, Dr Gopinātha Kavirāja, Dr Giuseppe Tucci, Lāmā Anagarika Govinda, Dr G. C. Pānde and some others. See *Buddhistic Culture*, pp. 144-146, 369-372.

32. See Monier-Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 856
33. Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, New York, 1958 ; S. N. Dāsguptā, *Yoga as Philosophy and Religion*, London, 1924 ; Alain Danielou, *Yoga, the Method of Re-integration*, London, 1949.
34. James H. Woods, *The Yoga System of Patanjali*, Harvard Oriental Series, vol. XVII, reprinted, Delhi, 1966; S. N. Dāsguptā, *Yoga Philosophy in Relation to Other Systems of Indian Thought*, Calcuttā, 1930 ; Richard Garbe on 'Yoga' in *ERE*, vol. XII, pp. 831-833 ; Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, Meridian Books; New York, 1960, pp. 280 ff. The *Yogasūtra* and *Yogasūtra-bhāshya* with Hindī translation are published by the Gitā Press, Gorakhpur, tr. by Omānanda Shāstrī.
35. Some Vedic references to *munis*, *yatis*, *shramanas* and *Vaikhānasas* : *Rigveda* X. 136. 2, 4, 5 ; *Rigveda*, VIII. 3. 9 ; *Rigveda*, VIII. 6. 18 ; *Rigveda*, X. 72. 7 ; *Aiharvaveda*, VII. 74. 1 ; XV (*Vrātyakānda*) ; *Taittirīya Samhitā*, II. 9. 2 ; VI. 2. 7. 5 ; *Kāthaka Samhitā*, VIII. 5 ; *Taittirīya Brāhmana*, III. 4. 5, 1 ; *Aitareya Brāhmana*, 33. 11 ; 28. 1 ; VI. 33. 3 ; *Vājasaneyī Samhitā*, XXX. 8 ; *Panchavimsha Brāhmana*, XIV. 4 ; VIII. 1. 4 ; XIII. 4. 16 ; see L. M. Joshī, *Buddhistic Culture*, pp. 409-411, 418, note 195 ; Keith and Macdonell, *Vedic Index*, vol. II, pp. 167-168, 185, 342-344.
36. See G. C. Pānde, *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*, Allāhābād, 1957, chapter VIII ; Heinrich Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, Meridian ed., pp. 281, 599-600 ; L. M. Joshī, *Aspects of Buddhism in Indian History*, Kandy, 1973.
37. Vide John Marshall, *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilization*, vol. 1, London, 1931, pp. 48-58, plates XII. 17C ; XVI. 29 ; CXVIII. 11 ; G. C. Pānde, *op. cit.*, L. M. Joshī, *op. cit.* ; Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, pp. 101 ff.
38. *Aitareya Brāhmana*, 33. 11 ; *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra*, II. 6. 29-31 ; *Gautama Dharmasūtra*, III. 35.
39. See P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmashāstra*, vol. II, part I, Poonā, 1941, chapter VIII, pp. 416 ff. Even the *Chhāndogyopanishad*, II. 23. 1, knows only the first three grades of 'duties' (*dharmas-kandhas*). All other oldest Upanishads, such as *Br.Up.*, *Kath.Up.*, *Mundaka*, *Isha*, *Kena*, *Taittirīya*, *Māndukya*, *Shvetāshvatara*, are posterior to Buddha. The oldest of Upanishads have been placed between 550 B. C. and 200 B. C. by competent Indologists. The thought of the older Upanishads is clearly influenced by non-Vedic and non-Brāhmanic teachers called *Munis*, *Shramanas*, *Yatis* and *Mundakas*.
40. *Sūyagadanga*, I. 12, 11, 20-21 ; H. Jacobi, *Jaina Sūtras* in SBE, vols. 22 and 45 ; *Dīgha Nikāya*, vol. I, *Brahmajālasutta* and *Sāmannaphalasutta* ; T. W. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of Buddha*, vol. I ; Rāhula Sāmkṛityāyana, *Buddhacharyā*, Sārnāth, 1957 ; G. C. Pānde, *op. cit.*, ch. IX ; N. Dutt, *Early Monastic Buddhism*, vol. I, 2nd ed., Calcuttā, 1961, chapter II ; Sukumār Dutta, *Early Buddhist Monachism*, Bombay, 1956 ; T. W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, London, 1905.
41. *Mundakopanishad*, III. 1. 5.
42. *Dhammapada*, verse 93—*yassa-āsavā parikkhinā* ; *Mundakopanishad*, III. 1. 6—*samnyāsa-yogād yatayah shuddhasattvāh*. Early Buddhist ideal of renunciation is well known to scholars. The very institution of *bhikshu-sangha* was

based upon the ideal of renunciation and homeless holy life.

43. R. E. Hume, *Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, 2nd ed., OUP, Madras, 1958, pp. 359-360.
44. *Kathopanishad*, first line of the last stanza.
45. *Shvetāshvataropaniṣad*, II. 8-15. Cf. L. M. Joshi, *Buddhistic Culture*, pp. 306-307 and notes.
46. R. E. Hume's translation, *op. cit.*, pp. 398-399; *Shvet.Up.*, II. 12-13; II. 12 is comparable to a passage in the Buddhist *Guhyasamājantra*, ed. GOS, p. 164. See L. M. Joshi, *op. cit.*, pp. 361-362. On Vedic *yoga* see Eliade, *Yoga*, pp. 101 f.; *ibid*; *Shamanism*, pp. 408 ff.
47. *Shvetāshvataropaniṣad*, VI. 13; *Mahābhārata*, *Vanaparvan*, 2. 15, *Shāntiparvan*, 228.28, 289.1 etc., *Anuśāsanaparvan*, 14. 323; *Bhagavadgītā*, V. 4. 5; *Padmapurāna*, *Pātālakhanda*, 85. 11 f.
48. *Mahābhārata*, *Shāntiparvan*, chapter 232, verses 4-7; cf. *ibid.*, 301-31.
49. *Mahābhārata*, *Shāntiparvan*, chapter 232, verse 32; cf. E. W. Hopkins, 'Yoga Techniques in the Great Epic', *JAOS*, 1901, pp. 333 ff.
50. *Mahābhārata*, *Shāntiparvan*, chapter 289, verse 26; this verse is quoted by Shamkara on *Brahmasūtra*, I. 2. 27.
51. *Mahābhārata*, *Shāntiparvan*, 304. 1.
52. *Mahābhārata*, *Shāntiparvan*, 304. 7, 9; *Āshvamedhikaparvan*, 19. 17.
53. Edward Conze, *Buddhist Meditation*, London, 1956; Somathera, *The Way of Mindfulness*, Colombo, 1949; M. Anesaki and J. Takakusu on *Dhyāna* in *ERE*, vol. IV, pp. 702 ff.
54. See the following sources on *dhyāna* and *yoga* in classical Buddhism: *Anguttara Nikāya*, vol. I, pp. 150-151; *Dīgha Nikāya*, vol. I, pp. 65-67; *ibid.*, vol. III, p. 173; *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Saṅgīthasutta*; *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Vitakkasanthanasutta*; *Samyutta Nikāya* (Pāli Text Society Edition), vol. III, p. 13; *Shikshāsamuccaya-kārikā*, 8-9; *Vishuddhimagga* (PTS ed.), p. 84 on the definition of *samādhi*; *Milindapanha* (PTS ed.), pp. 365-389, *Path of Freedom (Vimuttimagga)*, tr. by Ehara, Soma, and Kheminda, Colombo, 1961, pp. 39 ff., 63 f., 71 ff.; *Dhammapada*, verses 33-43, 185, 395, 401, 407 etc. The Pāli texts cited in this paper refer to the Nālandā Nāgarī edition of the Pāli Tipitaka except where otherwise stated. Some Buddhist Sanskrit sources on *dhyāna*, *samādhi* and *yoga* are *Saundarananda*, XIII. 30-56; *Samādhirājasūtra*, ed. in BST, No. 2, Darbhanga, 1961; *Bodhi-charyāvatāra*, chapter VIII (ed. BST, No. 12). *Yogāchārabhūmi-shāstra*, *Mahāyānasūtralankāra*, *Abhisamayālaṅkāra-Kārikās* and *Saddharmalankāvatārasūtra* are standard texts on *Yogāchāra* idealism of Buddhism.
55. See *Dharma-samgraha*, sections 72 and 83; Har Dayāl, *op. cit.*, pp. 229-236.
56. Vide *Anguttara Nikāya*, vol. I, p. 254 ff. and vol. III, p. 240 (PTS ed.); Etienne Lamotte, translation of *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-shāstra*, vol. I, p. 230; Rhys Davids and Stede, *Pāli-English Dictionary*, on *Idhī*; Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism*, London, 1964, pp. 410 ff.
57. *Chullavagga*, pp. 196-97; *Mahāvagga*, p. 55; *Majjhima Nikāya*, vol. I, p. 38;

- Suttanipāta*, *Khaggavisānasutta*, *Munisutta* etc. ; S. Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monachism*, reprinted, Bombay, 1956; Mrs. Rhys Davids on 'Asceticism' in *ERE*, vol. II, p. 69.
58. *Samyutta Nikāya*, vol. II, pp. 132-133; *Dīpavamśa*, IV. 3; *Milindapaṇha*, chapter VI ; *Visuddhimagga*, PTS ed., pp. 59-83 ; *Dharma-saṅgraha*, section 63 (where only 12 are listed) ; Takakusu, I-tsing's *Record*, Oxford, 1898, p. 86.
59. L. M. Joshi, *Buddhistic Culture*, pp. 109-11, 147.
60. As pointed out by N. Dutt (*Early Monastic Buddhism*, vol. I, 2nd ed., 1961, p. 153, note 2), ascetic practices were neither held in esteem nor were considered essential for mental training in Buddhism ; cf. *Majjhima Nikāya*, vol. I, p. 238 ; *Dīgha Nikāya*, vol. III, pp. 42-45 (PTS editions).
61. On Bodhisattva ideal see *Bodhicharyāvatāra* of Śhāntideva, Sanskrit text with Prajñākara's commentary, edited by P. L. Vaidya, Darbhāṅgā, 1966 ; text with Hindi translation by S. B. Shāstrī, Lucknow, 1955. A modern work on this subject is by Har Dayāl, *op. cit.*; see also L. M. Joshi, *Buddhistic Culture*, chapter V.
62. Gopinātha Kavirāja's 'Bhūmikā' in *Bauddha-Dharma-Darshana* by Narendradeva, Patnā, 1956 ; G. Tucci, *Theory and Practice of the Mandala*, London, 1961 ; S. B. Dāsgupta, *Introduction to Tāntrik Buddhism*, Calcuttā, 1958 ; L. M. Joshi, *Buddhistic Culture*, chapter XI and the original sources cited therein ; Lāmā Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, London, 1959 ; S. B. Dāsgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, 2nd ed., Calcuttā, 1958.
63. *Bhagavadgītā*, II. 48-50.
64. *Ibid.*, II. 56 ; *Dhammapada*, verses 89-90.
65. *Bhagavadgītā*, II. 69.
66. *Ibid.* III. 3
67. *Ibid.*, V. 1-4 ; cf. *Dhammapada*, verse 83.
68. *Bhagavadgītā*, V. 5-11 ; VI. 1-4 ; VI. 8. 36 ; some other relevant references to *yoga* and *yogin* are VIII. 10-12, 27-28 ; XI. 4 ; XVIII. 78, Krishna as *yogeshvara* ; XII. 12 *dhyāna* as superior to *jnāna* ; at XIII. 24, *dhyāna*, *sāmkhya-yoga*, and *karmayoga* are three ways to Ultimate Truth ; see also XV. 11 ; fierce austerities are condemned at XVII. 5. 19 ; *saṁnyāsa* and *tyāga* are again defined at XVIII. 2, 11 ; in chapters IX, X, XI, XII and XVIII, *bhakti-yoga*, devotion to God (Vishnu) is expounded. The characteristics of a true *yogin* are comparable to those of a true *bhikshu* or a true *brāhmaṇa* of Buddhist view. See *Dhammapada*, *Bhikkhu-vagga* and *Brāhmaṇavagga*.
69. *Mahābhārata*, XII. 349. 65, states that God (Hiranyagarbha, lit. 'golden womb') was the (first) teacher of *yoga*. This view is repeated in *Gītā*, IV. 1. But the authors of the *Mahābhārata* seem to be ignorant of Harappan *yogins*, Vedic *munis* and Buddhist *bhikshus*. However, we must remember that Kapila and Buddha, the two greatest non-Vedic seers, are among the *avatāras* of Vishnu in the Purānas.
70. *Yogasūtra*, II. 29. See J. H. Woods, *op. cit.*, pp. 177 ff.

71. See, e.g., *Dharma-samgraha*, section 50 : right view, right resolve, right livelihood, right speech, right action, right efforts, right mindfulness, and right concentration.
72. *Yogasūtra*, II.45; *samādhi* is defined in *ibid.*, III.3. Buddhist definition of *samādhi* may be seen in *Visuddhimagga* of Buddhaghosha (ed. PTS ), p.84. For modern discussion, see Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, pp. 67 ff.; J. H. Woods, *The Yoga System of Patanjali (Yogasūtra, Yogabhāshya and Tattvavaiśhārādī)*. These may profitably be read along with *The Path of Purity (Visuddhimagga)*, translated by P. Maung Tin, London, 1923-31, in 3 vols, and *The Path of Freedom (Vimuttimagga)*, translated by Ehara, Soma and Kheminda, Colombo, 1961.
73. See Omānanda Shāstrī, *Pātanjala-yoga-pradīpa* ( Gorakhpur ed. ), pp. 133-134 ; quotations from *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* and *Hathayoga-pradīpikā*.
74. *Yogataitvopaniśad*, verses 19, 21-23 ; cf. P. V. Kane, *op.cit.*, vol. V, part II, p. 1447.
75. *Hathayoga-pradīpikā* (Adyār Library, 1972), chapter I, verses 17-35.
76. *Shivasamhitā*, III. 100 ; *Gherandasamhitā*, II. 1 ; *Gorakshashataka*, verse 5 ; *Dhyānabindūpaniśad*, verse 42.
77. *Hathayoga-pradīpikā*, II, 22.
78. *Hathayoga-pradīpikā*, I. 5-8.
79. On this sect see George W. Briggs, *Gorakhnāth and Kānphat Yogīs*, Calcuttā and London, 1938; Hazārī Prasād Dvivedī, *Nātha Sampradāya*, 2nd edition, Vārānasī, 1966 ; Rāngeya Rāghava, *Gorakhanātha Aur Unakā Yuga*, Delhī, 1963 ; A. K. Banerjī, *The Philosophy of Gorakhanātha*, Gorakhpur, 1963 ; Mohan Singh, *Gorakhanātha and Medieval Hindū Mysticism*, Lāhore, 1937 ; some original basic texts of the Nātha sect are *Gorakshasiddhānta-samgraha*, ed. by Gopinātha Kavirāja, Sarasvatī Bhavana Texts, No. 18, Kāshī, 1925 ; *Gorakshapaddhati*, ed. Mahīdhar Sharmā, Bombay, Samvat 1990 ; *Amaraughashāsana*, ed. by Mukund Rām Shāstrī, Kashmīr Series of Sanskrit Texts, No. 20, Bombay, 1918 ; *Yogisampradāyāvishkriṭih* of Chandranātha Yogī, Ahmedābād, 1924 ; *Siddha-Siddhānta-Samgraha*, ed. by Gopinātha Kavirāja, S. B. Texts, No. 13 Kāshī, 1925 ; *Hathayoga-pradīpikā*, Adyār Library, Adyār, 1972 ; *Shivasamhitā*, Pānini Office, Allāhābād, 1914 ; *Kaulajñāna-nīrnaya*, ed. by P. C. Bagchī, Calcuttā Sanskrit Series, No. 3, Calcuttā, 1934.
80. See *Hathayoga-pradīpikā*, I. 1. 8 where *nāthas* are mentioned; *Goraksha-Siddhānta-Samgraha*, pp. 12, 18, 21, 56, 58 (where *siddhamata*, *siddhamārga*, *yogamārga*, *yogasampradāya*, *avadhūta mata*, *avadhūta sampradāya* occur) ; *Prapanchsāratāntra*, XIX. 62-63, where *yogī* is called *jnāna-mukta*. See also Rāhula Sāmkṛityāyana, *Purātattva Nibandhāvalī* ; Hazārī Prasād Dvivedī, *Nātha Sampradāya* ; Parashu Rām Chaturvedī, *Uttarī Bhārata kī Santa Paramparā*.
81. See Monier-Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 534.
82. See N. Dutt in *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, vol. IV, Bhāratiya Vidyā Bhavan, Bombay, pp. 266-268.

83. For references, see L. M. Joshi, *Buddhistic Culture*, Appendix V, pp. 449-458, esp. p. 457, note 3.
84. *Hathayoga-pradīpikā*, I. 5-9 (Adyār Library Edition, 1972).
85. Hazārī Prasād Dvivedī, *Nātha Sampradāya*, 2nd ed., Vārānasī, 1966, pp. 36-38.
86. See *The Cultural Heritage of India*, vol. IV (Calcuttā, 1959), p. 274.
87. *Panchatantra* of Vishnusharman, opening lines; E. C. Sachau, *Alberūnī's India*, vol. I, pp. 93, 189, 238, 247.
88. *Sarva-darshana-samgraha*, Eng. Tr. by Cowell & Gough (Vārānasī, 1961), pp. 137-139.



## MEDIEVAL PUNJĀB\*

S. NURUL HASAN

While fully sharing the approach that regional history should not be permitted to be influenced by chauvinistic and separatist considerations, I would like to emphasize the importance of the study of regional history for the study of the history of India as a whole.

Ours is a large country with considerable variations in its different regions. At the same time, the existence of major differences notwithstanding, there is a remarkable unity in the broad pattern of socio-economic development, culture, and administrative institutions. The understanding of the significant trends of historical change in the country would remain sadly incomplete unless the details are studied at the regional level. In fact, most detailed studies are possible only at that level, such as the working of the administrative machinery, land relations, pattern of agricultural production, organization of trade and handicrafts, position of social classes and groups, etc. These regional studies will be meaningful only if they are undertaken in the context of the history of the whole country, for only then can the significance of the different features be understood and the distinctiveness appreciated. Even the problems of regional history would arise in the mind of a scholar only as a part of the study of the history of the country as a whole, for the process of social change and the factors motivating it can hardly be observed within the narrow field of a region.

I may be forgiven if by the Punjāb I refer neither to the territory of the present Indian state of that name, nor even of the *Punjābī Sūbā* which many friends think should be established. Punjāb, the land of the five rivers, is a geographical as well as a historical entity. More or less, the Punjāb comprised the territory coinciding with the British province of that name and included the Punjāb hill states and Jammū. Geographically, this means the five *doābs*, the basin of the upper

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Ghaggar, and the northern hill areas economically connected with the plains. It is true that during the medieval period the territory to which I have referred did not form part of a single political unit. Ever since Mahmūd of Ghaznī had made Lāhore a province of his empire, his governors and descendants made several attempts to bring the entire territory up to Delhī under their control. But their authority over the hill areas, the territory between the Sutlej and the Jamunā, and over Multān was by no means continuous or stable. During the Sultānate period, Multān, Dipālpur and Lāhore were generally under separate governors while the cis-Sutlej region remained administratively cut off from the rest of the Punjāb. For a time, Multān was governed by an independent dynasty. Under Akbar and his successors the region was divided between the *sūbās* of Lāhore and Multān, while the *sarkārs* of Sirhind and Hissār Firozā formed part of the *sūbā* of Delhī with the Sutlej forming the boundary. Yet in spite of the administrative fragmentation, the Punjāb had developed, during the medieval period, a personality of its own. It was socially and culturally distinct from the Gangā-Jamunā Doāb on the east, Kashmīr on the north, the territory of Roh<sup>1</sup> on the west, and Rājputānā on the south. It is true that within this region there were variations from place to place and from one social group to the other, but these variations do not militate against the broader historical unity of the Punjāb. In fact, no one had ever seriously questioned this unity until the British imperialists decided to partition it on the basis of religion.<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding the madness which gripped the people of the region in the wake of partition, the affectionate memories of the glory of united Punjāb still move the hearts of the common people.

The history of the Punjāb during the medieval period is marked by several distinctive features, each of which needs to be studied with great care. I shall refer to only a few of these.

First and foremost, society in the Punjāb during the middle ages was characterized by the powerful survivals of tribal organization. The tribe (*qaum* or *zāt*), the clan (*qabilā*) and smaller groups of cognatic relatives dominated social relations and materially influenced relationships of production. Administration and policies also revolved round tribal organizations. Tribal society retained many of its basic pastoral characteristics even where agriculture and trade were highly developed. The region of Dipālpur remained comparatively backward agriculturally during most of the medieval period, and, therefore, it was only natural that the pastoral features should be more pronounced there. Wealth was

counted in terms of head of cattle, and the tax was widely collected on the basis of cattle rather than land or agricultural production. But even in areas where agriculture was developed revenue was often taken in terms of individuals or cattle. For example, Bābar writes about the territory roughly corresponding to the modern district of Jhelum :

...One tribe is called Jud and the other Jaujna. From old times they have been the rulers and inhabitants of this hill, and of the *ils* and *uluses* which are between Nilab and Bherā; but their power is exerted in a friendly and brotherly way. They cannot take from them whatever they please. They take as their share a portion that has been fixed from very remote times...They give a *shahrūkhī* for each head of cattle and seven *shahrūkhīs* are paid by each master of a family...The chief man amongst them gets the name of *rāi*; his younger brother and sons are called *maliks*.

During the Mughal period agriculture was further extended and the state provided considerable encouragement, including the extension of irrigation works. According to Abul Fazal, irrigation in the *sūbā* of Lāhore was chiefly from wells. Later, canals were also constructed. With the extension of cultivation the system of assessing revenue per *bīghā* of land under cultivation (*zābtī* system) was also extended, while the *Ghallā-bakhshī* system was further developed in the province of Multān. Notwithstanding these changes, the tribal pattern continued and produced a new form of feudalism. There were areas where a dominant tribe would be of *zamīndārs* while the peasants or occupancy tenant would be of another tribe. In both cases, vestiges of communal, tribal and clan rights would continue. Simultaneously, in many cases, individuals of a tribe tended to acquire rights of overlordship over the other members of the same tribe. Then there were peculiar institutions like that of the *dhok*. The number of small *zamīndārs* who let out land to tenants and simultaneously carried on cultivation themselves appears to be much larger in the Punjāb than in the Gangā valley or Rājputānā. These developments also appear to be connected with the continuance of the tribal system.

The complexity of the socio-economic relationship in the Punjāb appears to have been accentuated because many new tribes seem to have come to the region during the medieval period and established themselves in a position of superiority over the tribes which had held control earlier. These tribes were sometimes pushed out, but were generally

depressed and made to accept inferior positions. This tribal tussle and the changes in the state of tribes very probably continued throughout the medieval period. Even the position as recorded in the *Āin-i-Akbarī* had undergone appreciable changes by the eighteenth century. A careful study of the tribal organization of the Punjāb will open new vistas of research in different aspects of Indian history—political, economic, social and cultural.

Not only was the agricultural fertility of the Punjāb “rarely equalled” in the words of Abul Fazal, but also its trade was highly developed. Lāhore, which became during the Mughal period one of the biggest cities of the country, could boast of “the choicest productions of Turkistān, Persia, and Hindustān” and was considered the “resort of the people of all countries whose manufactures present an astonishing display” (*Āin-i-Akbarī*). Multān had also become a great centre of international trade, passing not only through the overland route to Qandhār, but also through Indus to Arab countries beyond the seas. Although it had somewhat declined by the second half of the seventeenth century, its commercial importance is mentioned even by Thevenot. No study worth the name has yet been made of the volume, nature, pattern, organization or the economic significance of this trade.

Abundant agricultural surplus and extensive trade led to the two-fold development—growth of science and technology on the one hand and expansion of manufactures on the other. Even a preliminary study made so far has revealed that Lāhore had become a great centre of mathematical sciences and scientific instrument-making during the seventeenth century. The family of Ustād Īsā of Lāhore, the architect of the Tāj Mahal, was well known for mathematics and science, and is credited with the compilation of a number of scientific works. Astrolobes manufactured in Lāhore were considered to be among the best in the east. Similarly, there are references to the extensive existence of handicrafts and manufactures, and to the skill of the Punjābī craftsmen.

From the point of view of political history, the study of relationship of the chieftains with the representatives of the Central Government deserves particular attention. The important part played by the Rājput *rājās* of the hill states has been only inadequately studied. Nor is much known about the political role of even such important tribal chiefs as the Gakkars. The Balochī incursions into the Punjāb and the acquisition of territory by them seem to be very important, but not much is known about these. Incidentally, the main Balochī centre, the Derājāt,

does not figure in the revenue list given by Abul Fazal, even though it had definitely accepted Mughal suzerainty. Is it a fact, as tradition puts it, that this centre paid no land revenue? If so, why not?

While the Balochī immigration into the Punjāb left permanent marks, it is difficult to detect the lasting signs of many other incursions. It is known that many "Ghāzīs"<sup>3</sup> from central Asia came to the Punjāb with the Ghaznavid armies and settled here. What happened to them and who are their descendants? Throughout the thirteenth and, in fact, the fourteenth centuries, the Mongols kept raiding India.

Most of the raids were checked in the Punjāb. The military commanders of the Punjāb who were entrusted with the responsibility of defending the Sultānate from the Mongol raiders played a very important part in the politics of Hindustān. But it is not known whether the Mongol attacks or their defeat left any durable marks on the history of the Punjāb. We also know that partly as a result of the Mongol attacks and partly due to the expansion of the Chughtāi power in Afghānistān, there were immigrations on a large scale of Afghān tribes from Roh to India. It is, however, surprising that comparatively few of these Afghān clans settled down in the Punjāb permanently. The considerable Afghān settlement of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the Punjāb, dwindled appreciably in the seventeenth century.

Punjāb has been the great home of religious movements in the middle ages. Shaikh Alī Hujwīrī, the author of *Kashful Mahjūb*, a major theoretical work on Sūfism, lived at Lāhore in the Ghaznavid period and died there. Bahāuddīn Zakarīyā established the Suhrāwardī order at Multān which became particularly important when his grandson, Ruknuddīn, received favours from the Tughlaq Sultāns. Shaikh Farīd-ud-Dīn Ganj Shakar, the famous Chishtī, established himself at Ajodhan, later called Pākpatan. His family became very influential. Another Suhrāwardī saint, Sayyed Jalāl-ud-Dīn Bukhārī, called Makhdūm Jahaman Jahāngasht, was held in great esteem by Fīroz Tughlaq and, consequently, his headquarters in Uch acquired considerable importance. A very large number of Muslim tribes of the Punjāb claim that their ancestors were converted to Islām by one or the other of these saints. In spite of a careful study of the records of these Sūfī saints, I have failed to get any evidence of their missionary activities. It is quite possible that later Muslims considered it more "respectable" to attribute the conversion of their ancestors to the miraculous powers of a famous saint rather than to some mundane motive. But the question remains: When were these

tribes converted and why did they change their faith? It is obvious that the common people could not have changed their faith for any ideological reason, nor were they converted by the "argument of the sword." There is no such evidence on record. Moreover, why was the "argument of the sword" not applied near Delhī? Considering that many of the tribes who were converted belonged to the economically deprived sections of society, the temptation of material gain could have been a likely factor. Perhaps, this phenomenon can be explained in socio-economic terms, but that requires further investigations.

During the Mughal period, the Punjāb was simultaneously the home of a militant revivalist Muslim movement and of a tolerant liberal trend. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindī,<sup>4</sup> the regenerator of the second millennium to his followers, spearheaded an intolerant and chauvinistic movement. Because of his influence over the Afghān tribes settled in the Punjāb and of his attempt to utilize, in the fashion of the Jesuits, the grandees of the empire, he was thrown into prison by Jahāngīr. When released, he preferred to stay at the court to avoid further troubles. His disciple, Shaikh Ādam of Banūr, had to leave the country because his activities among the Afghān tribesmen were considered to be prejudicial to the state. Very different in character was the Qādirī centre of Lāhore. The liberal outlook of Miān Mīr and Mullā Shāh received support from Dārā Shikoh, who incidentally, held for long the governorship of Lāhore. What were the social roots of these contradictory movements and from where did they receive sustenance are some of the interesting problems for investigation.

The most significant religious movement to have emerged from the Punjāb is undoubtedly the Sikh movement. Gurū Nānak made an explicit attempt to unify the Hindūs and Muslims, and certainly succeeded in synthesizing, within his own teachings, the essential concepts of Hindūism and Islām. His message was essentially for the common man, and his identification with the message was so complete that, in his teachings and in the idiom he used, the life and struggles of the peasant find a reflection. Naturally, a great deal has been written of Gurū Nānak and of the Sikhs by many scholars; yet, even this subject deserves further and careful study. What were the socio-economic origins of the early followers of Gurū Nānak and his spiritual successors? What aspects of the Gurū's teaching attracted them most, if it can be assumed that the masses during the medieval period changed their faith because of individual ideological predilections? Alternatively, what were the other reasons and the mechanics of the spread of Sikhism? Even the fre-

quently answered question regarding the transformation of a tolerant religious community into a militant sect deserves further investigation. Neither Jahāngīr's treatment of Gurū Arjun nor the attitude adopted by Aurangzeb provides an adequate explanation for the emergence of this powerful movement. A more careful examination of the social, economic and political factors might alter our understanding of the transformation.

I have ventured to refer to only some of the major problems of the history of the Punjāb during the medieval period, which I feel deserve fuller study. Such investigation will simultaneously be of value in understanding the wider historical processes in the country. There is however one major difficulty in conducting such studies. The destiny of the Punjāb being so closely linked with the rest of the country, there is no worthwhile medieval history or chronicle dealing exclusively with the region. The historical data regarding the Punjāb have therefore to be culled from the general medieval chronicles. Apart from the difficulty of collecting evidence which is widely scattered, there is the more serious problem of the scope of the medieval chronicles being materially different from the things we wish to study. Consequently, bits and pieces of information have to be collected and inferences drawn. The detail, even though meagre and incomplete, has to be carefully analysed with the help of modern apparatus of historical investigation. This has to be supplemented by sources of other types such as administration manuals, accounts left by foreign travellers, religious literature and the few original documents extant. In fact, the Punjāb is not as fortunate as Rājasthān or Hyderābād in this respect. However, in the records preserved at Bikāner and Hyderābād, valuable references are available to developments in the Punjāb. I do hope that a sufficient number of scholars will acquire adequate linguistic proficiency to be able to use these documents and sources.

The inadequacy of sources makes it necessary for scholars to employ the difficult as well as dangerous technique of working backwards, i. e., studying the earliest definite data available and then proceeding to examine to what extent was the earlier situation similar. For example, the evidence collected by the early British administrators regarding the tribes or the land system can be a useful point for "working backwards" in time. Along with this is the task of conducting sociological and anthropological field-investigations and the collection of oral traditions and folklore before society changes further and the blurred memories are

completely obliterated. The recently developed technique of utilizing sociological and anthropological evidences as sources of history, though by no means free from objection, can be usefully employed.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Abbās Khān (in *Tārīkh-i-Shershāhi*) defines the territory of Roh as the Afghān region between Attock and Sibi (in Balūchistān) with the Indus as its eastern boundary.
2. It is significant that in the course of the earliest studies conducted by the British administrators, the observation has generally been made that cultural differences on grounds of religion are of a comparatively minor nature. Cf. *Punjab District Gazetteers*.
3. For a discussion of the term "Ghāzi", see Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, Introduction.
4. For an interesting study of Shaikh Ahmad and his disciple, see A.A. Rizvi's recent book *Muslim Revivalist Movement in India*.



TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH  
CENTURY PUNJĀB : THE TESTIMONY OF  
THE SIKH DEVOTIONAL LITERATURE

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The importance of trade is a feature of Punjāb history at once obvious and obscure. The most cursory survey of the geography of the area, of its known history, and of its social structure will indicate the vast extent of the trade which must have passed through the Punjāb, and also of the considerable amount which must have been conducted within it. A glance at a map of the area will at once indicate the reason for its importance. It will be noted that the Punjāb lies across both of the principal land routes linking India with western and central Asia. Trade from the North-West has for centuries been funnelled through the Khyber Pass, a route which leads directly into the Punjāb. In the same manner trade from western Asia, passing through Qandhār, has normally travelled down the Bolān Pass and thence into the area which may legitimately be regarded as southern Punjāb. Although the volume of trade which has moved along these routes can never be computed, there can be no doubt that it must have been immense. The opening of the direct sea route to Europe made little difference to this volume, for a significant portion of the earlier Europe trade had not been carried over the roads which passed through the Punjāb. The decline, when it eventually came, related more to political conditions within the areas traversed by the routes than to the provision of alternative routes for the same trade.

A second feature to be observed in any cursory survey is the presence of Lāhore and Multān within the Punjāb. Both cities were primarily trading centres, and, as the major centres of the northern and southern routes respectively, they both attained a considerable wealth and eminence. Other smaller cities shared in the trade, notably Lāhore's twin city Amritsar. Although Amritsar is a relatively recent city, having been founded only in the late sixteenth century, it appears to have developed with some speed. This development it owed partly to its

status as the principal Sikh centre and partly to its location on the northern trade route.

A third feature is the importance in Punjāb social patterns of two trading castes which are largely confined to this area. These are the Khatrīs and the Arorās. Although Khatrīs are to be found in widely scattered parts of India and adjacent countries, their true home is the Punjāb, and to this day most of the community are still concentrated there. Insofar as they have moved beyond the borders of the Punjāb they have done so precisely because they are a trading community, and a trading community of unusual enterprise. The Arorās have also achieved a considerable success in mercantile professions, but their activities have been much more restricted to the Punjāb and its environs.

These three features set the importance of trade to the Punjāb beyond all doubt. In asserting that trade has been of considerable significance in Punjāb history we merely state the obvious. Everyone who has any knowledge of the area is well aware of this fact.

Having thus stated the obvious, we must at once qualify it. Trade may have been of considerable importance to the Punjāb during the seventeenth century and earlier, but in fact we know surprisingly little about it during this period. Specifically, we know very little about the investment which sustained it. Much of what we do know amounts to little more than inference from the features just mentioned, supported in some instances by references which occur in literature relating to the Punjāb. Even when these inferences are well supported they still tend, in many cases, to be general comments which do not carry us very far in our endeavour to understand the mechanics of trade and investment or the society which pursued this particular profession.

Insofar as research has proceeded beyond inference and general comment, it has followed a standard pattern. The basis of this limited research has been provided by Persian chronicles (notably the *Āin-i-Akbarī*) and conclusions derived from these are extended from the restricted periods and areas covered by the chronicles to wider periods and areas which seem to share their general features. To the testimony of the Persian chronicles have been added the occasional comments of European travellers who happened to visit the Punjāb.

This, plainly, is a most inadequate method. The chronicles are limited in number and drastically restricted in scope. Few of the chroniclers could be called economists, even in the most generous sense of that term, and in consequence the questions which they asked were normally

much different from those which a modern economic historian would want to ask. Nor were they themselves traders. They were the servants of political and military leaders, and their works naturally reflect the dominant interests of their patrons. The only point at which these interests impinged to any significant extent upon the concerns of economic historians was in the area of economic potential and specifically of tax assessment. It is partly to this particular interest that we owe the most valuable of all the Persian chronicles, the *Āīn-i-Akbarī* of Abul Fazal. This substantial survey includes sections on those provinces which now constitute modern Punjāb.

The second shortcoming of the Persian chronicles is the relative narrowness of their geographical range. The locus of most chronicles is the royal court and it was only on rare occasions that the royal court or person was to be found in the Punjāb. These occasions, and others of particular interest, would draw the brief attention of a chronicler, but the interest soon reverted to areas further east. Only one of the important chroniclers was himself a Punjābī (Sujān Rāi Bhandārī of Batālā), and with that single exception they had little personal interest in the Punjāb.

The testimony of European visitors is even slighter. Few ever visited the Punjāb prior to the eighteenth century, and their comments are limited to observations which are largely geographical and social. Even these tend to magnify the extraordinary and have to be treated with some caution. The European reports can occasionally provide a glimpse of supplementary value but little else to assist the economic historian.

Although this method of research suffers from serious shortcomings, the purpose of this essay is not to call it in question. Regrettable though this situation may be, there is in fact no other method available. We are compelled to retain a primary reliance upon the Persian sources, supplementing them where possible with references from other works. The purpose of this essay is merely to draw attention to a supplementary source which has hitherto been almost completely ignored. This is the devotional literature of the Sikhs, and specifically the *janam-sākhīs* of Gurū Nānak. As far as the writer is aware, the sacred scripture of the Sikhs has been accorded only a passing reference, and the extensive collection of Punjābī *janam-sākhīs* has been completely overlooked. This literature is not going to supply us with the material to write an economic history of the Punjāb, but it can provide glimpses which might supplement the basic Persian sources.

At first sight the devotional literature of the Sikhs looks very promising in this respect. It was composed and recorded in the Punjāb, and it evolved within a community which in its earlier phase was conspicuous for its Khatrī leadership. The ten Gurūs were all Khatrīs, within the community Khatrīs were otherwise prominent, and the early geographical extension of the Sikh faith beyond the Punjāb is essentially a testimony to Khatrī trading enterprise. This augurs well for glimpses of trade and investment in sixteenth and seventeenth century Punjāb.

Sikh devotional literature may be divided into three categories. First, there is the *Ādi Granth*, the sacred scripture compiled by Gurū Arjun at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Secondly, there is the corpus of janam-sākhī literature to which a specific emphasis has already been applied. This literature had already begun to evolve by the end of the sixteenth century and its period of major growth was the seventeenth century. Thirdly, there are the miscellaneous traditions associated with the Gurūs who followed Gurū Nānak.

In all three cases there is a linguistic barrier to be surmounted; for analysis of the kind required for this purpose will be seriously hampered by a lack of access to the original texts. This may limit the research to those who can read Punjābī, but it need not frustrate the endeavour. It merely lays a particular responsibility on those who possess the means of access.

A measure of disappointment does, however, await the endeavour and it would be unwise to proceed without first stressing this. The initial impression of the Punjābī sources' potential value is liable to be unrealistically optimistic. Others have plunged into the Sūfī literature of the period with the same high expectations and having failed to find them fulfilled to the extent anticipated have been inclined to dismiss them as worthless to the economic historian; or if not totally worthless at least insufficiently valuable to justify the burden of wearisome reading or the labour of analysis. In the light of this experience a dual emphasis would appear to be advisable. The Sikh devotional literature is of only limited value to the economic historian, and the student who seeks to utilize it for this purpose must expect to labour for a relatively limited return. This much is true, but it is also true that even limited returns are worth seeking in an area which is at once important and little understood.

There are two principal reasons for the disappointment of initial

expectations. The first is that the emphasis of this literature is even more strongly religious than one might expect. This is particularly the case with the *Ādi Granth*, but also applies to the janam-sākhīs and to much of the remaining seventeenth century tradition. The second is that, although Khatrīs were particularly prominent in the early community, most of them were rural Khatrīs. This was certainly true in the case of most of the Gurūs, and although an exception should perhaps be made in the case of Gurū Amar Dās, the fact that his *gaddī* was established in the important town of Goindwāl<sup>1</sup> does not appear to have left any distinctively mercantile impress upon his works. The same rural concerns also seem to be characteristic of the Khatrīs who participated in the moulding of the janam-sākhī traditions. This does not rule out a knowledge of mercantile procedure, but it does suggest that such knowledge, where it exists, will apply to small scale trading rather than to the variety which requires substantial investment.

But let us not stress the disadvantages too strongly. A median position is required. The Sikh devotional literature presents serious problems of access and interpretation, and it provides at best a supplementary source. At the same time, it offers returns of sufficient potential value to warrant the investment of labour which will be required. Our alternative sources are too meagre to permit us to overlook this one merely because it does not promise easy returns.

In this endeavour much will depend on our method of analysis. If we limit our attention to the specifically religious purpose for which the literature was composed, we shall learn little that relates to an economic interest. If it be protested that this is another example of stating the obvious one can only reply that in practice it is fatally easy to let an author's ever-present concerns dictate the pattern of one's own thoughts. It is possible to read the janam-sākhī story of Duni Chand many times before there dawns the realization that this simple narrative incorporates a two-fold economic interest.<sup>2</sup> In this instance, as we shall see later, the relevant information is embedded in two references which, for the narrator, served an entirely different purpose. It is precisely in this manner that most of the information of this kind is communicated. The economic reference may serve as a simile to illustrate a particular doctrinal point; or it may appear as a detail in an anecdote concerning the Gurū. Although for this very reason such references may be easily missed, they are, for the same reason, generally reliable. There would be no advantage to be gained from misrepresentation, for the author's

concern is invariably directed to issues of an entirely different kind. Indeed, there would be every reason for ensuring accuracy. The author's argument would lose much of its force if his images or his incidental details failed to accord with the known environment of his audience.

Having stressed both the difficulties and the potential value of the analysis, let us now seek a few examples of the kind of reference which may respond to the analysis. We shall look first at the *Ādi Granth* and then at the *janam-sākhīs*. The first of these will receive only a brief notice, partly because its yield in this respect is potentially less than that of the *janam-sākhīs* but more particularly because the case for utilizing the *Ādi Granth* in this manner has already been made by Dr Irfān Habib.<sup>3</sup> Dr Irfān Habib's article was specifically concerned with agrarian issues, but the argument which he outlines can be applied to a wider field of economic activity.

Gurū Nānak's usage of mercantile imagery is well illustrated by his shabad *Sorath 2*.<sup>2</sup>

Let the increase of your years be a shop  
 stocked with the merchandise of the divine Name.  
 Let the faculty wherewith you comprehend the  
 divine Word be your warehouse, and store  
 therein (your stock of the divine Name).  
 Deal with (other) traders (in the divine Name)  
 and harvest a profit of truth within your heart.

Let the hearing of sacred scriptures be your  
 commerce; load (your wares on) the horses of  
 truth and be on your way.  
 Let good deeds be (the payment of your) travel  
 expenses (and) do not suppose (that this  
 business can be put off until) the morrow.  
 Proceed (forthwith) to the realm of the Formless  
 One; (there) you shall dwell in peace.<sup>4</sup>

It is at once clear what interests Gurū Nānak. The merchandise in which he deals is the divine Name and the objective of the business is liberation. For the purposes of this essay, however, it is the imagery and the vocabulary which is of primary concern. What it communicates

is a brief glimpse of a warehouse, a stock of commodities, distances sufficient to require the use of horses, and a system of travel expenses. No one could possibly claim that we have here an articulated description of the mechanics of trade during Nānak's period; but nor can the image be dismissed as the product of the author's imagination. Allusions of this kind are meaningful only in a society which practises an extensive trade. Gurū Nānak is justly renowned for effectiveness of his imagery, and, if this imagery assumes a well developed pattern of trade, it follows that such a pattern must in fact have existed. Moreover, if it was well known to the rural society which constituted Nānak's audience, it must have occupied a position of considerable prominence in the Punjāb economy of his time.

At this point, one can reasonably expect protestations concerning the dimensions of the structure which inference is erecting upon the slender base of poetic allusion. To this the reply must be a reminder concerning the paucity of alternative sources and a claim to the effect that we have no better method of handling this material. If the line of reasoning is faulty other references will almost certainly conflict with it. It must also be stressed that the example which has been quoted is by no means an isolated one. The Gurūs are fond of mercantile imagery and words such as *vakhar* or *saudā* (merchandise), *mūl* (capital), *dhan* (wealth), and *vanjāriā* (trader) recur in their compositions. Another characteristic example from the works of Gurū Nānak is his *Sirī Rāg 23* which begins :

When you trade, O trader, guard your wares.  
Buy only those articles which you can carry  
(to the hereafter).  
For there the Master merchant is wise, and  
taking your merchandise He will scrutinize  
it with care.<sup>5</sup>

A later example is provided by the fifth Gurū's *Āsā 6*<sup>6</sup> and in the *Sirī Rāg Pahare 1-4*<sup>7</sup> we have a cluster by the first, fourth, and fifth Gurūs.

The contribution of the *Ādi Granth* is largely limited to imagery and the impressions which this imagery communicates are at best fragmentary. In the narrative *janam-sākhīs*, we encounter anecdotes which indicate specific details. One of the most popular of all *janam-sākhī* anecdotes is the *Bālā* story of *Kharā Saudā* or "The Good Bargain," a

name which at once suggests a glimpse of a mercantile transaction. The anecdote relates how Nānak's father Kālū, concerned at his son's apparent inactivity, urged him to turn his attention to petty trading.

"Son Nānak," said Kālū, "take twenty rupees and bring four or five articles. If on this occasion you make a good bargain you will receive many rupees."<sup>8</sup>

Here too, as in the *Ādi Granth*, the reference is intended to serve a religious purpose. Gurū Nānak, having accepted the money, is said to have distributed it to *faqīrs* and then to have informed his father that he had thereby made his 'good bargain.' This story can be analysed in a variety of ways. Its message is in conflict with Gurū Nānak's own pronouncements on the subject of unearned charity, and so from one point of view it is of interest as a reassertion within the later community of an ascetic ideal Gurū Nānak had earlier rejected. It can also be read simply as a statement of how a rural Khatrī might be expected to make some money through a small investment, and herein lies its distinctive economic interest.

This is, however, investment on a very small scale. Mighty trading enterprises may often have small beginnings, but without some account of subsequent developments the minor enterprise is of little significance. It positively confirms what we might otherwise have confidently expected, but does little more than that.

A more suggestive anecdote relates to a somewhat later period in Gurū Nānak's life. During his early manhood, Gurū Nānak moved to Sultānpur and there entered the service of the local Nawāb. The *janam-sākhīs* all include a story of how the Gurū, while residing in Sultānpur, confounded the Nawāb's hypocritical Qāzī. On one occasion, while the Qāzī was reciting the second daily prayer of the Muslims in the presence of the Nawāb's retinue, he observed that infidel Nānak was laughing. Outraged he lodged a complaint before the Nawāb who summoned Nānak to give an explanation for such blasphemous conduct. Gurū Nānak assured him that it was really the Qāzī who was guilty of blasphemy, for while reciting the words of the prayer he had let his thoughts wander to his new-born filly which was standing out in the paddock, dangerously near an open well. Because he could read these wandering thoughts he had laughed.

Most *janam-sākhīs* terminate the anecdote at this point, but the *Bālā* version continues a little further. It adds that Gurū Nānak had also read the Nawāb's own thoughts and that during the prayer the Nawāb



had been contemplating a journey to Qandhār to buy horses.<sup>9</sup> The account stresses that Nawāb was a Pathān and implies that this was a distinctive trade of the Pathāns in India. Once again it may be protested that we might well have guessed this and once again it can be replied that confirmation is always worth obtaining.

Horse-trading in Qandhār would require considerably more investment than the twenty rupees of the *Kharā Saudā* story, but it is still no more than medium-scale trading. A large enterprise is indicated by the story of a Khatrī trader whom the later janam-sākhīs call Mansukh. The story of Mansukh serves as a prologue to the account of how Gurū Nānak visited the *rājā* called Shivanābh who lived "across the sea." (Later accounts identify the location with Ceylon). Mansukh appears first as a wealthy shopkeeper of Lāhore. In this capacity he visits Bābā Nānak, is converted, remains with his new master for three years, and then finally takes leave in order to undertake a trading venture. He proceeds to the sea, lades a vessel, and sets sail for Shivanābh's domain.<sup>10</sup>

None of the janam-sākhīs give any details concerning either the financing of the enterprise or the goods which were taken for trading, and it can legitimately be claimed that the whole story is probably a legend anyway. All this may be granted, but the story of Mansukh nevertheless retains a certain limited relevance to the concerns of the economic historian. The anecdote could never have evolved if, in fact, such trading ventures were never undertaken by Khatrīs from the Punjāb. The same can also be said for the tradition which relates the manner in which Gurū Tegh Bahādur's claims to the succession were recognized at the village of Bakālā. Whether true or not, the story of Makhan Shāh could never have been told if maritime ventures of this kind were never undertaken.

The anecdotes concerning *Kharā Saudā*, the hypocritical Qāzī, and Mansukh the Khatrī trader all serve to communicate general impressions rather than specific details. As an example of the latter, we can return to the story of Dunī Chand as related in the *Purātan* janam-sākhīs. The earlier version recorded in the *B40* janam-sākhī indicates only one detail of significance, whereas the *Purātan* version includes two.<sup>11</sup>

According to the *Purātan* janam-sākhī, Dunī Chand was a Dhuppar Khatrī of Lāhore. Bābā Nānak happened to arrive in Lāhore while Dunī Chand was celebrating a *shrāddh* ceremony on behalf of his deceased father. When Bābā Nānak asked him what he was doing he informed him that it was a *shrāddh* ceremony and that he had already fed a

hundred Brāhman. Gurū Nānak suggested that this was perhaps a mistaken order of priorities, for his unfortunate father had not eaten for three days. The puzzled Dunī Chand asked how this could be the case and was informed that his father, reincarnated as a wolf, was lying under a tree a few miles away. Dunī Chand took food and proceeding to the tree fed his reincarnated father. The wolf then informed him that the lowly incarnation he had received was the penalty he had to pay for coveting some stewed fish while at the point of death.

Following this experience, Dunī Chand took Bābā Nānak to his home in Lāhore. There Gurū Nānak observed seven pennants fluttering above the house and, when he asked for an explanation, Dunī Chand proudly informed him that each pennant represented a lakh of rupees. (The earlier *B40* version, which mentions only four pennants, declares that each pennant represents a coffer of treasure). Bābā Nānak then gave Dunī Chand a needle and instructed him to return it when they met in the hereafter. Dunī Chand agreed to do so, but was later mocked by his wife for his foolishness. How could he possibly carry a needle with him to the hereafter! Dunī Chand pursued Bābā Nānak and returned the needle, explaining that he now realized it could not be carried across the threshold of death. Bābā Nānak replied that the same also applied to his hoarded wealth.

Both anecdotes serve obvious religious purposes. The first teaches the futility of ceremonies, and the second the uselessness of accumulated wealth. With these purposes we are not here concerned. The issue which concerns us is the economic question of what happened to the profits of trade. Dunī Chand is a Khatrī and trade would be the likely way for a Khatrī to make money. Each anecdote indicates a means of accounting for substantial quantity of wealth. The first indicates expenditure on ostentatious ceremony; and the second specifies hoarding. The later version implies the hoarding of coin, and the earlier version the hoarding of bullion or of precious stones.

Once again we are given no more than indications, but they are suggestive indications. Although we must refrain from positive affirmations concerning the disposal of wealth, we are certainly entitled to draw tentative conclusions. In an area as ill-served by sources as the sixteenth and seventeenth century Punjāb, this is a distinct gain. Tentative theories may be much less satisfying than detailed documentation; they are also vastly better than nothing at all, particularly when they serve to warn us against extending to obscure areas of historical

understanding conclusions which derive from other periods or other places. It is a condition which illustrates the particular problems of the medieval historian who, without account books or tables of statistics, must make the best he can of the limited materials at his disposal. At the same time it illustrates the peculiar fascination of his work. The art of detection can be an uncommonly interesting procedure.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Goindvāl, which is now only a village, was during the time of Gurū Amar Dās strategically situated at the point where the imperial high road to Lāhore crossed the Beās river.
2. *Purātan Janam-sākhī*, sākhī 37.
3. Irfān Habīb, "Evidence for Sixteenth-Century Agrarian Conditions in the Gurū Granth Sāhib," in *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol. 1, No. 3 (Jan-Mar., 1964).
4. *Ādi Granth*, p. 595.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 372.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 74-78.
8. *Bālā Janam-sākhī* (Hafaz Qutub Dīn, 1871 edition), sākhī 6.
9. *Ibid.*, sākhī 15.
10. *Purātan Janam-sākhī*, sākhī 41.
11. India Office Library MS. Punj. B 40, folios 189-90. *Purātan Janam-sākhī*, sākhī 37.

## JATTS OF PUNJĀB AND SIND\*

IRFAN HABIB

This essay proposes to present a certain amount of speculation about the history of a large section of the Punjābī-speaking population, during the millennium ending with the seventeenth century. This speculation raises certain other historical questions, besides, of course, the question of its own validity. Some of these questions are spelt out here. The further task of answering them definitively—a task requiring knowledge I do not possess—I shall leave to scholars better equipped than I am.

The argument that is to follow would be simplified if I were first to clarify certain geographical matters. Since I am at the moment mainly interested in the Punjābī-speaking population, the 'Punjāb' that I have in mind approximates to the British province of the Punjāb, as it existed before 1947, together with the princely states lying within it, but excluding the territory of the present states of Haryānā and Himāchal Pradesh.

It is easy to follow Spate in dividing this region into two unequal parts. The first and larger portion, comprising, indeed, the bulk of the region, consists of the alluvial plains with rivers draining into, or (in the case of Saraswatī and Ghaggar) towards, the Indus. The second is the Potwār plateau containing the historic site of Taxilā and the fort of Rohtās. This is fringed in the south and south-east by the Salt Range and in the west by the Indus, and in the north by the Himālayan foothills. While it is of course true that there is no correspondingly clear physiographic features to enable one to make a further division of the first and larger alluvial portion,<sup>1</sup> there do exist certain reasons for believing that it might not always have been geographically a homogeneous unit.

When the Punjāb rivers leave the Himālayas and enter the plains, they tend to flow in deep channels, with very marked high banks. These

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\* From the Presidential Address given at the Medieval Section of the Punjāb History Conference (1971), Punjāb University, Patialā.

high banks raise the larger parts of the *doābā* into a quasi-plateau, where the water-table reaches more than 100 feet below ground-surface. As a result, before the modern canal system was laid out, irrigation, whether directly from the river or from wells, remained largely confined to the sub-montane plains, served by a number of tributary streams of the major rivers, and to the banks of the main, and seasonally active, abandoned channels of these rivers. This means that there should have been two distinct blocks of cultivated territory in the alluvium: the first lying roughly above the 200 metre contour, from Jhelum to Ludhiānā, including the towns of Siālkot and Lāhore; the other, created in the south-east by the numerous channels thrown out by the major rivers as they draw towards one another, and containing the towns of Multān, Uch and Pākattan. These two blocks, joined to each other at two or three points by the narrow margins of cultivation along the main rivers, were elsewhere separated by the desert of the Sind-Sāgar Doāb, the steppes or *bārs* of the Rechnā Doāb, and the Lakhī Jungle created by the maze of the Beās-Sutlej river channels around Dipālpur.<sup>2</sup>

This geographical division has been reflected quite distinctly in medieval political boundaries. In the seventh century Hiuen Tsang founded a kingdom called Tsek-kia—the Tākiā of the Arabs, and, probably, Takka in its original form—which contained both Shākala (Siālkot) and Mūlsthānapura (Multān), and which extended from the Beās to the Indus.<sup>3</sup> This kingdom was subsequently wholly absorbed by Sind, and, when the Arabs conquered the latter kingdom early in the next century, their commander not only occupied Multān, but marched to beyond Shākalha (Shākala).<sup>4</sup> But as the Arab power declined and Multān alone remained under Arab control, Lahāwur, or Lāhore, developed into a separate centre. Henceforth, up to the decline of Mughal empire a state or provincial boundary nearly always intervened between the two cities. The Mughal province of the Punjāb or Lāhore included the Potwār plateau, but the whole of the southern Punjāb lay within the Multān province, which also included northern Sind and the Shibi territory.

The remarkable fact is that philology also authorized the division of the plains that we have suggested on geographical grounds, for Grierson took 74° Long. E. to be an approximate line dividing the area where Lahndā dialects are prominent, from the area where Punjābī proper is spoken.<sup>5</sup> In the former the traces of Sindhī and Dardic are very noticeable, whereas Punjābī is more closely linked with Midland Hindī. Grierson believes that this phenomenon is to be explained by an incursion

into the Punjāb of "the inhabitants of the Midland [who], through pressure of population or for some other reason, gradually took possession of the Punjāb and partly imposed their own language on the inhabitants."<sup>6</sup> Grierson's authority must always carry weight; but surely the "linguistic condition" he describes can plausibly be explained by an emigration of population from the south-west, which then imposed its vocabulary upon an existent language based on Dardic and Midland Hindī. Given this assumption, the intruders would have imposed their 'outer' language more heavily in the Multān area, while outside of it, beyond Long. 74<sup>o</sup>, in the Salt Range in the north the influences of their language would weaken.<sup>7</sup>

I should like to suggest that this possible interpretation of the linguistic condition may also be considered. I say this especially because of the peculiar nature of the evidence that I am going to present about the history of the Jatts, which appears to me to suggest a migration in the direction opposite to the one postulated by Grierson.

I have elsewhere<sup>8</sup> referred to this evidence. But I should now like to offer fuller references. No description of the Jatts is available before the seventh century, though scholarly ingenuity may find solitary references in Sanskrit texts to tribes bearing similar names. In the seventh century, Hiuen Tšang found in Sin-tū or Sind a people whom he described as follows : "...By the side of the river Sindh, along the flat marshy lowlands for some thousand *li*, there are several hundreds of thousands (*a very great many*) families settled...They give themselves to tending cattle and from this derive their livelihood ... They have no masters, and whether men or women, have neither rich nor poor." They claimed to be Buddhists, but they were "of an unfeeling temper" and "hasty disposition."<sup>9</sup> This large pastoral population, left unnamed by Hiuen Tsang, is described in practically identical terms by the *Chachnāmā*, the celebrated account of the Arab conquest of Sind, A. D. 710-14.<sup>10</sup> The important addition is that their people are given the name of Jatt. They are said to have lived on both banks of the Indus, which divided them into western and eastern Jatts.<sup>11</sup> They were especially concentrated in central Sind, in the territory of Brahmanābād.<sup>12</sup> Their settlements extended in the south to the port of Debal,<sup>13</sup> and in the north to Siwistān (Sehwān) and the region of Bodhiya immediately to its north.<sup>14</sup> They are designated *dashṭī*, i.e. belonging to the steppes or wastes.<sup>15</sup> There were no small or great among them. They were supposed to lack marital laws. The only tribute they could pay was in the form of firewood. They owed

allegiance to the Buddhist *śhramanas*; and under the Brāhmana dynasty of Chach there had been harsh constraints imposed on them, which the Arab conquerors confirmed.<sup>16</sup> Besides pastoralism, the only other occupations they pursued were those of soldiers<sup>17</sup> and boatmen.<sup>18</sup>

The Jatts are also noticed in Sind proper during the next century. In A. D. 836 an Arab governor summoned them to appear and pay *jiziya*, each to be accompanied by a dog,<sup>19</sup> a mark of humiliation, prescribed also under the previous Brāhmana regime.<sup>20</sup>

Till then the Jatts were not mentioned in connection with the Punjāb anywhere at all. When Muhammad-bin-Qāsim occupied Bhatiyā on the Beās and then Multān and marched further northward, the Jatts were no longer encountered. But early in the eleventh century, we suddenly have the appearance in strength of "the Jatts of Multān and Bhatiyā [by] the banks of the Sihun [Indus]," who with their 4,000 or 8,000 boats engaged the forces of Mahmūd of Ghaznān.<sup>21</sup> The Jatts' presence in the Punjāb is also attested by the statement of another Ghaznavid historian that these "seditious Hindūs" had supported Sultān Masūd's officers against the rebel Yanaltigin.<sup>22</sup> Alberūnī (c. 1030), whose direct experience of India was confined to the Lāhore area, took the Jatts to be "cattle-owners, low Shūdra people."<sup>23</sup>

The trend of this evidence appears to me to be unmistakable. A northward migration of the Jatts into the southern Punjāb from Sind must have taken place by the eleventh century. One can see now how this fits in with the philological evidence, which attests to the considerable influence of a language akin to Sindhī in the Multān area, a situation one would naturally expect to have followed the migration of the Jatts into the region. It is not without significance that one of the recognized names of Lahndā is Jatkī, the language of the Jatts who, as Grierson says, are "numerous in the central part of the Lahndā tract."<sup>24</sup>

The postulation of a connection between the Jatts of the Punjāb and the Jatts of Sind of the seventh and eighth centuries would be a mere exercise in anthropological speculation, were it not that this might offer us some insight into the kind of economic and social changes that were taking place in the Punjāb in medieval times. We have seen that in Sind the Jatts had been a large primitive community, based on a pastoral economy and with an egalitarian or semi-egalitarian social structure. They had "neither rich nor poor," nor "small nor great," in the words of two quite independent accounts. How long did this state of affairs continue?

Unfortunately, the curtain descends on the Jatts for the next four hundred years. I have not been able to locate any reference to them in the chronicles of the Delhī Sultānate, though this may be only because I have not looked carefully enough. I should certainly urge that there should be an earnest search for such references.

The curtain, so far as I know, lifts only with the *Āin-i-Akbarī* and its record of *zamīndār* castes, compiled about 1595. The *Āin* lists *zamīndār* castes against each *parganā*. These lists show that the Jatts were now concentrated in a region extending from the Jech and Upper Rechnā Doāb, across the upper and central Bārī Doāb, to the cis-Sutlej territories of Sirhind and Hisār Firozā. There were two other blocks, one consisting of settlements in the Upper Jamunā-Gangā Doāb, penetrating into Rohilkhand; and the other consisting of scattered settlements west of the Jamunā from south of Delhī to south of Chambal.<sup>25</sup> This by and large accords with the present settlements of the Jatt (and Jāt) castes, except that towards the south-east a modern map would show a more extensive area, thanks to the expansion of Jāt *zamīndārī* during the eighteenth century Jāt kingdom of Sūraj Mal.

We can immediately see that the *Āin-i-Akbarī*'s evidence corroborates the oral Jāt traditions of their migrations into the present Uttar Pradesh from Haryānā and further west.<sup>26</sup> Unrecorded by chronicles, the Jatts must have expanded during the four centuries previous to the *Āin-i-Akbarī*, from the geographical region of Multān into that of Lāhore and beyond, and also towards the east. A feature of this expansion seems to have been that the Jatts no longer carried with them a strong 'Outer Language-wave' and this possibly indicates that they had remained in the Multān region for a considerable time before they broke out of the weak geographical barriers around it.

The four centuries between the eleventh and the sixteenth not only saw a great expansion of the Jatt population; these also apparently witnessed a great transformation in their economic basis, there being a remarkable conversion from pastoralism to agriculture.

In Sind, where the Jatts first appear in historical record, their name is now borne only by a small caste of camel-breeders—77,920 in all by the 1901 census<sup>27</sup>—clearly mere survivals of what was once a large pastoral population. But in the Punjāb, Haryānā and western Uttar Pradesh, the name Jatt or Jāt is borne by the most vigorous peasant castes. This was almost certainly already the case in these regions at the time the *Āin-i-Akbarī* was compiled.



So close has become the connection of the Jatts with peasant-agriculture in the Punjāb that, besides being a caste-name, the word Jāt can mean an agriculturist and Jatakī similarly can mean agriculture. Ibbetson even expressed the opinion that there was probably a continuous influx into the ranks of the Jatts, as men of other castes took to agriculture and, in course of time, designated themselves Jatts by virtue of their profession.<sup>28</sup> This duality in the use of the name of Jatt had already come about before the middle of the seventeenth century. While the author of the *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib* (c. 1655) in his account of Sikhism describes the Jatts as "the lowest caste of the Vaishyas," he also states that "Jatt in the language of the Punjāb means a villager, a rustic."<sup>29</sup> Clearly, the Jatts had already come to represent the typical peasants in the Punjāb of that time.

It seems that the second phase of the expansion of the Jatts in which they stepped out of the Lahndā-speaking region and penetrated into the region of Midland Hindī and their conversion into an essentially peasant population were not only simultaneous, but also linked processes. I would even argue that this phase of their expansion was probably successful only because the Jatts had turned or were turning into peasants, and could, therefore, take advantage of conditions making for extension of cultivation in the region during the twelfth-sixteenth centuries.

That such conditions at all existed is of course a point to be established, or at any rate checked against the historical evidence. At the moment, I have only two rather slender leads to follow. The first is the tradition, preserved by Sujān Rāi Bhandārī, of a revival of the Punjāb from the desolation caused by the Mongol raids and a widespread extension of cultivation in the fifteenth century.<sup>30</sup>

The second is the sudden appearance of the wooden Persian wheel proper, complete with its chain of buckets (or, rather rope carrying pots) and gearing mechanism, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, when it had already been diffused all over the Punjāb (Lāhore, Dipālpur and Sirhind).<sup>31</sup> I have already argued that the device, particularly when accompanied by the gearing mechanism, could not have come more than two centuries earlier than Bābur's time; and, as already suggested by Needham, the *araghatta* of the earlier times was a noria, or a wheel carrying pots on its circumference, and thus much more limited in its capacity to function over wells, or to utilize animal power, than the Persian wheel.<sup>32</sup> In this belief I have been fortified recently by

the photograph of a sculptured panel from Mandor (Rājasthān), ascribed to the eleventh century. This, contrary to the commentary accompanying it, plainly shows a noria. There is no 'chain,' and no gearing mechanism. The animal shown is not pulling the wheel but is actually drinking the water pouring out from it, while the wheel is being worked by a man standing by its side.<sup>33</sup>

I have already suggested elsewhere<sup>34</sup> that the coming of the Persian wheel, a device which could lift water from depths not accessible to other Indian systems of waterlift, and which could also be worked by animal power, might well have brought about a critical change in the agricultural situation of the Punjāb, where irrigation, before the modern canal system, depended mainly on wells.<sup>35</sup> Its introduction and diffusion in the Punjāb was, therefore, bound to result in a substantial increase in cultivation. For me, at least, the temptation is very great to suggest that the Persian wheel lay behind at least part of the Jatts' conversion to agriculture and their expanding settlements. It is certainly singular that the area of the Persian wheel, as defined by Bābur, should so closely coincide with the main region of the Jatts mapped by the *Āin*'s list of *zamīndār* castes.

I have no hesitation in admitting again that what I have pursued up till now is really a series of speculations based on a variety of evidence. This by itself should not, I submit, be held against what I have attempted to do. In case the evidence adds to something more than mere coincidences, my hypotheses may in the end prove justified.

It seems to me that, if what has been postulated above turns out largely to be in conformity with fact, we may have here interesting material for analyzing sixteenth and seventeenth century developments in the Punjāb. It is now almost a *cliche* that the Jatts form the backbone of the Sikh community. If one is permitted to oversimplify, for the convenience of a concise statement, one may say that the shift from Khatrī to Jatt leadership within the Sikh movement had already taken place by the middle of seventeenth century. At that time the author of the *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib* noted that, although the Gurūs had been Khatrīs, "they have made the Khatrīs subservient to the Jatts, who are the lowest caste among the Vāishyas. Thus most of the great *masands* of the Gurūs are Jatts."<sup>36</sup>

It has always seemed to me a question worth asking why, when other movements similar to Gurū Nānak's, movements so similar that the verses of their preachers were included in the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, failed

to take strong roots among the peasantry, in their own regions, Sikhism should so greatly have succeeded in this. It is quite clear that what Gurū Nānak and his successors preached was a universal faith, and not a narrow or sectional doctrine. But, like all great religions, Sikhism made progress differently in different areas and different classes. It is always incredibly difficult to analyze the teachings of a religion in historical terms, to work out what aspects of it made particular appeal to what strata, and what aspects were stressed by whom. Individuals naturally tend to interpret every universal message in terms they can themselves understand; and thus a distinction is bound to arise in the case of every religion between the substance of the message and its actual comprehension, however lively and sincere might be the attempts that are made to attain an absolutely loyal comprehension of the original doctrine.

Can it, therefore, have happened that the Jatts received Sikhism at a time when by historical circumstances they were in need of it most, and so saw it as a message of particular import to themselves? We have seen that the Jatts, as an originally pastoral community, had been condemned to a humiliating position; they had then expanded and transformed themselves into large agricultural communities. It is almost certain that, in spite of this transformation, the older caste stigma persisted. The other castes do not still allow the Jatts the status of Kshatriyas to which they lay claim, and the traditional view, recorded by Skinner at Hānsī in 1825, was that they arose out of the wedlock between a Kshatriya and a Vaishya woman.<sup>37</sup> The *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib*, about the middle of the seventeenth century, described them, as we have seen, as the lowest caste among the Vaishyas, though this was still an advance over the Shūdra classification of Alberūnī in the eleventh century. It is, therefore, quite likely that the Jatts who, in the sixteenth century, were not only entirely peasants but, in so many localities of the Punjāb, also *zamīndārs* would assert themselves against a social status which no longer corresponded to their economic position.

For such cases Indian society has usually had the mechanism which modern sociologists tend to term Sanskritization. In most such cases, the top strata of the lower caste would 'Sanskritize' and merge into the higher castes in due course of time. Why this could not easily happen with the Jatts—although the process is not entirely lacking there—is perhaps mainly because they had inherited from their earlier stage an egalitarian or semi-egalitarian social structure, to which both Hiuen

Tsang and the *Chachnāmā* bear testimony. In such circumstances, Sikhism, which rejected in theory the entire system of caste and whose Gurūs in practice raised Jatts to the highest positions without hesitation, could not but fail to win over and command the loyalty of large sections from amongst the Jatts. To them Sikh Scripture's stirring words, written in the name of Dhannā Jāt, might have had a significance beyond the purely spiritual one that the Gurū had in mind :

Having heard all this, I, a Jāt, applied myself to devotion :  
I have met the Lord in person; such is the great fortune  
of Dhannā.

But I would go further; I do not think it is adequate to see in the Jatt espousal of Sikhism a mere alternative to Sanskritization. The Jatts were peasants, and the one outstanding problem of the peasants in the seventeenth century was that they had to bear a very heavy burden of land revenue and a great degree of oppression of the ruling classes of the Mughal empire. I have elsewhere argued that this situation was bound to provoke peasant revolts.<sup>38</sup> On this I have not anything new to add, but it does seem to me that the militant development of the Sikh community during the seventeenth century can have one major explanation in the resort to armed violence by the Jatt peasantry, when the economic pressure became increasingly intolerable. This further cemented the historical association between the Jatt peasantry and Sikhism, though the association itself certainly antedates the agrarian crisis of the Mughal empire.

## APPENDIX

### TABLE

Sarkārs where Jatts are recorded as *zamīndārs* in the *Āin-i-Akbarī*

| Sarkār         | Total number of parganās | Total number of parganās where Zamīndārs are recorded | Number of parganās where Jatts are entered among Zamīndārs |
|----------------|--------------------------|---|--|
| <b>MULTĀN</b>  |                          |   |  |
| <i>Multān</i>  |                          |   |  |
| Beth Jalandhar | 9                        | 9   | 2  |
| Bāri Doāb      | 11                       | 11  | 2  |

|                |    |    |     |
|----------------|----|----|-----|
| Rechnau        | 6  | 6  | 2   |
| Sindhsāgar     | 4  | 2  | 1   |
| Birun Panjread | 17 | 10 | nil |

*Dipālpur*

|                |    |   |   |
|----------------|----|---|---|
| Beth Jalandhar | 10 | 9 | 5 |
| Bāri           | 6  | 6 | 1 |
| Rechnau        | 7  | 6 | 2 |
| Birun Panjread | 6  | 5 | 2 |

*LĀHORE*

|                |    |    |    |
|----------------|----|----|----|
| Beth Jalandhar | 60 | 42 | 4  |
| Bāri           | 52 | 29 | 12 |
| Rechnau        | 57 | 40 | 17 |
| Chanhāt        | 21 | 15 | 5  |

*DELHI*

|              |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|
| Delhī        | 48 | 45 | 18 |
| Sambhal      | 47 | 39 | 6  |
| Sahāranpur   | 36 | 35 | 6  |
| Rewārī       | 12 | 11 | 4  |
| Hisār Firuzā | 27 | 27 | 18 |
| Sirhind      | 33 | 33 | 13 |

*ĀGRĀ*

|          |    |    |   |
|----------|----|----|---|
| Āgrā     | 33 | 32 | 6 |
| Kol      | 21 | 21 | 1 |
| Gwālīor  | 13 | 13 | 1 |
| Bayanwan | 27 | 26 | 6 |
| Alwar    | 43 | 41 | 1 |
| Nārnaul  | 16 | 16 | 2 |
| Sahar    | 6  | 6  | 5 |

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. O. H. K. Spate and A. T. A. Learmonth, *India and Pākistān*, 3rd ed., 1967, p. 513.

2. For a description of the Lakhi Jungle at the end of the seventeenth century, see Sujān Rāi Bhandāri, *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārīkh*, ed. Zafar Hasan, p. 63; Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, tr. Irvine, II, pp. 457-58.
3. S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, I, pp. 165 ff., II, pp. 274-5; T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, I, pp. 286 ff., II, pp. 254-55.
4. *Chachnāmā*, ed. Daudpota, pp. 37-38, 236-41.
5. G. A. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, I, i, pp. 134-35.
6. *Ibid.*, I, i, p. 135.
7. This 'weakening' in the north is shown by the fact that, compared to the Lahndā of Shāhpur district which Grierson took as standard, the Multāni dialect is "a transition dialect between Lahndā and Sindhi" (*Ibid.*, I, i, p. 137).
8. *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Vārānasi Session, 1969, pp. 154-55.
9. Beal, *op. cit.*, II, p. 273; Watters, *op. cit.*, II, p. 252.
10. *Chachnāmā*, ed. Daudpota, pp. 47, 214-15.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 132, 155, 173.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 47, 214-15.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 215.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 121. See also Balazuri, tr. Murgotten, *Foundations of the Islāmic State*, II, pp. 216-19.
15. *Chachnāmā*, p. 139.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48, 214-15.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 121; Balazuri, tr. Murgotten, II, p. 109.
18. *Chachnāmā*, p. 139; *Majmu'at Tawārīkh*, tr. Elliot and Dowson, *History of India as told by its own Historians*, I, p. 104.
19. Balazuri, tr. Murgotten, II, p. 236.
20. *Chachnāmā*, pp. 47-48, 214-15.
21. Gardizi, *Zainul Akhbār*, ed. M. Nazim, pp. 87-89.
22. *Tārīkh-i-Baihaqi*, ed. Ghani and Faiyaz, Tehrān, A. H. 1324, pp. 533-34.
23. *Alberūnī's India*, tr. Sachau, I, p. 401. Alberūnī uses this description in regard to Krishna's foster-parents.
24. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey*, I, i, p. 136.
25. See table giving the total number of *parganās* within each *sarkār* of the Multān, Lāhore, Delhī and Āgrā provinces, with numbers of *parganās* returning Jāt zamīndārs.
26. Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces*, III, p. 40.
27. Aitken, *Sind Gazetteer*, p. 174.
28. Ibbetson, *Punjab Castes*, Lāhore, 1916, pp. 105-6.
29. *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib*, ed. Nazar Ashraf, Calcuttā, 1809, pp. 276, 286.
30. Sujān Rāi Bhandāri, *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārīkh*, ed. Zāfar Hasan, pp. 66-67, 88.
31. *Bāburnāmā*, tr. A. S. Beveridge, II, p. 486; to be checked with the Turki Codex edited by Mrs Beveridge or the Persian tr. of Abdur Rahīm, Br. Mus. MS. Or. 2317, f. 376. b. Among other things, Mrs Beveridge omits Sirhind in her translation of the passage.
32. *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Vārānasi Session, 1969, pp. 153-194.
33. *Indian Journal of History of Science*, vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 387-88.
34. *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Vārānasi Session, 1969, pp. 153-54.

35. *Āin-i-Akbari*, ed. Blochmann, Bib. Ind., I, p. 538; Sujān Rāi Bhandāri, *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārikh*, p. 79.
36. *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib*, p. 286.
37. James Skinner, *Tashrihul Aqwam*, Br. Mus. MS Add. 27, 255 f.
38. *Agrarian System of Mughal India*, Bombay, 1963, pp. 318-51.

## PERSIAN WRITINGS ON GURŪ NĀNAK

GURBUX SINGH

The year of Gurū Nānak's birth quincenary witnessed a spurt of literature on his life and teachings. A closer study of all these works reveals that all the writers have, almost invariably, relied either on the Gurū's own *bānī* or on the literature available in the Gurmukhī script. Persian writings on Gurū Nānak, spread over a period of two hundred years, have, by and large, been ignored, if not completely neglected. Perhaps the difficulties of the language and the consequent obscurity of the texts coupled with the scholars' apprehensions regarding the non-contemporaneous nature of the accounts contained therein have deterred the scholars from relying on this source material. However, by voluntarily denying themselves the opportunity to use it, the scholars have, either deliberately or inadvertently, deprived themselves of an immensely rich and unexploited source of information. At least sixteen<sup>1</sup> such works have come down to us unadulterated and unscathed by the ravages of time. Apart from a woeful lack of trustworthy historical material on the subject, there are several other compelling reasons which necessitate a careful study of them. One wonders why the fact that at least three of these writers, namely Mobid Zulfiqār Ardistānī of the *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib*, Munshī Sujān Rāi Bhandārī of the *Khulāsat-ut-Tawārīkh* and Dīwān Nand Lāl Goyā of the *Kulliyāt Bhāi Nand Lāl*, pre-eminently conspicuous by being contemporary of one or the other Nānak, has not been noticed by scholars in proper historical perspective. It is also surprising why researchers have failed to perceive the spirit of historical investigation working in their writings and their keen historical awareness. That their meaningful comments on the origin, growth and development of the Sikh movement in the Punjāb should have aroused no interest in them is equally disappointing. This could be attributed to nothing else except sheer lack of familiarity with these sources. The scholars have deprived themselves of the insight these sources provide into the impact of Gurū Nānak's teaching and his personality on the subsequent far-reaching social and cultural developments in the Punjāb. It would be highly unfortunate to ignore this



potentially useful source material which helps us understand the development of Sikh character in the three centuries following the birth of Gurū Nānak.

This paper has, therefore, been written with the twofold aim of listing the Persian works of some of the scholars who wrote on Gurū Nānak and of providing a brief but critical appraisal of their comments on the life and the teachings of the founder of the Sikh faith.

From the chronological as well as textual point of view Mobid Zulfiqār Ardistānī's *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib* occupies a unique place. Ardistānī was the first Persian writer who attempted an objective and somewhat analytical study of Gurū Nānak as well as of the Sikhs. Besides being a man of religion himself and a seeker after spiritual truth, he was neither biased in favour of the Sikhs nor against them.<sup>2</sup> His personal friendship<sup>3</sup> with the Sixth Sikh Gurū, Gurū Hargobind, and his intimate connections with the learned among the Sikhs, had placed him in an extremely advantageous position to study Sikhism and its growth from very close quarters. Though history was not his primary discipline, yet he succeeded in avoiding falling into any grievous historical errors. He, no doubt, did not condemn the historical evidence contained in the Janamsākhi literature, but it is also pertinent to note that, barring a few romantic tales for which he exhibits a certain amount of habitual fascination, he did not take much from the Janamsākhis and excused himself on the ground that they were replete with miraculous tales and were too lengthy to be incorporated into his brief account.<sup>4</sup>

His comments on the basic principles of the unity of the Godhead,<sup>5</sup> unity in the plurality of Gurūship,<sup>6</sup> attitude towards the Hindū gods and goddesses,<sup>7</sup> sanctity of the Sanskrit language,<sup>8</sup> renunciation,<sup>9</sup> incarnation<sup>10</sup> and caste system<sup>11</sup> are incontrovertibly useful in understanding the essential features of earlier Sikhism. They demonstrate how quick he was in perceiving the deep erosion that Sikhism had made into the traditional Brāhmanical culture. It was no less than a miracle for him to see the Brāhmins as well as the Kshatriyas bow low before the Masands, who were invariably from the Jatt class, i.e. the representatives of the Vaishyas, a lower caste of the third grade, for receiving spiritual guidance.<sup>12</sup> A period of about eighty years had elapsed between the death of the First Gurū and the birth of the author, yet the circumstances were so favourable to him that his perceptive mind could not fail to make full use of his gains acquired through much labour.

The second writer was Munshī Sujān Rāi Bhandārī whose *Khulāsāt-ut-*

*Tawārīkh*, written in two years, was completed in 1697, two years before the initiation of the Khālsā by Gurū Gobind Singh. It is a general history of India from the earliest times to Aurangzeb's accession to the throne. The author, born at Batālā, in the Punjāb, was a contemporary of the Ninth and the Tenth Sikh Gurūs. He might or might not have been so close to the Sikh Gurūs as his illustrious predecessor Ardīstānī was, yet as a sensitive historian he could not but be greatly influenced by the powerful impact of the Sikh movement which had entered a new period of great spiritual and political crisis under the leadership of the Ninth Gurū, Gurū Tegh Bahādur. A highly objective, though no less eloquent, portrayal of the contemporary Sikh character enhances the value of his work. All the Sikhs, according to the author, were vested with a halo of divine effulgence<sup>13</sup> and spiritual greatness. Every Sikh's prayer was invariably answered by the Lord Almighty.<sup>14</sup> *Kīrtan*, the divine music, had a miraculous power of healing;<sup>15</sup> it could dispel darkness and rescue men from the slough of despair. Ardīstānī too had made reference to the spirit of service and sacrifice among the Sikhs, but Sujān Rāi's evidence on the subject remains unsurpassed in objectivity and forceful presentation. The author has not much to say directly on Gurū Nānak, yet his brief but pithy and eloquent remarks help us perceive the growth of Sikh character in the succeeding generations under the impact of Gurū Nānak's teachings.

Munshī Sujān Rāi had an equally illustrious contemporary, Dīwān Nand Lāl Goyā, a man of poetry and of considerable genius, who received spiritual training directly from Gurū Gobind Singh, the Tenth Nānak. He has given an account of the First Gurū in beautiful verses in the *Ganj Nāmā*, *Arzul Alfāz* and the *Jot Bikās*. Nand Lāl was not an historian. However, his lack of historical discipline appears to have been compensated by a liberal endowment of historical sense. There are no direct historical facts in his verses, yet we are certainly rewarded with illuminating summation of the life and the mission of Gurū Nānak. It is significant to note that whatever this man of genius had to say was said in poetry and all that he said conforms strictly to the essentials of the Sikh tradition. His comments on Gurū Nānak's mission, his relation with the Lord Almighty,<sup>16</sup> his emphasis on the Shabad<sup>17</sup> and the importance of Gurū's grace for emancipation are very valuable, coming as they do from one who enjoyed the trust of the Tenth Nānak.<sup>18</sup>

In the eighteenth century the two works of great historical interest we come across are Budh Singh Arorā's *Risālāh-i-Nānakshāh* and Ghulām

Husain Khān's *Siyar-ul-Muttākhirīn*. Both the scholars flourished in the second half of the eighteenth century. Budh Singh Arorā was a native of Lāhore but was attached to the Mughal court at Delhī. The whole of the eighteenth century was a period of great political storms and stresses for the Mughal governments both at the centre and in the provinces. The Sikhs too were faced with a grim struggle for political as well as cultural survival. The bloody sacrifices offered by the Sikhs and the disintegration consequent upon Ahmad Shāh Abdālī's repeated onslaughts, which ultimately culminated in establishing political ascendancy of the Sikhs, were spectacular events. Budh Singh appears to have gathered a good deal of information about the rise and progress of the Sikhs. However, by the time he was associated with the Mughal court at Delhī, a new factor had arisen. The British East India Company began to take greater interest in the affairs of northern India. Major James Browne was deputed from Calcuttā to Delhī in 1784 as the British representative at the court of Shāh Ālam. Under his active patronage, Budh Singh prepared a Persian translation of what he had in his possession about the Sikhs. Major James Browne then got its English translation published in 1788 under the title *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sicks* (The second of James Browne's *India Tracts*, London, 1788). In the preface to his work Budh Singh does not conceal his indebtedness<sup>19</sup> to Major James Browne whom he calls Nawāb Muin-ud-Daulāh, Nasīr-ul-Mulk, Major James Browne Angrez Bahādur Salābat Jang. The importance of his brief comments on Gurū Nānak lies in what he writes about the people's response to the Gurū's teachings. He says that so immense was the Gurū's popularity with the masses that they committed to memory almost all that the Gurū entrusted to them in the form of his *bānī* or in his *Prān Sanglī*.<sup>20</sup> His spiritual eminence had won for the Gurū a lasting place in the hearts of the people during the reign of Bābar, and wherever he went men flocked to him to receive spiritual enlightenment.<sup>21</sup> For subsequent history of the Sikhs, which it narrates up to 1764-65, the work has an undeniable value as a useful source material.

Ghulām Husain Khān's *Siyar-ul-Muttākhirīn*, completed in 1781, does not contain much more on Gurū Nānak than what Munshī Sujān Rāi Bhandāri and Budh Singh Arorā wrote earlier about the Gurū. However, for the post-Gurū Nānak period, it has considerable merit. One new point of fact mentioned by Ghulām Husain Khān about Gurū Nānak is that the latter had, during his boyhood at Talwandī, a teacher

by the name of Syed Hasan, a Muslim scholar and dervish.

With the dawn of the nineteenth century, as the Sikhs came to be regarded as a political force in northern India, a number of scholars too made their appearance to take notice of their achievements as well as of their failures. This category of writers can conveniently be divided into two groups i.e. the early nineteenth-century chroniclers and the mid-nineteenth-century chroniclers. The first group is represented by Ghulām Alī Khān Naqwaī of the *Imād-us-Saādat*, Khushwaqt Rāi of the *Tawārīkh-i-Sikhān*, Bakht Mal of the *Khālsāh Nāmāh* and Ahmad Shāh Batālvī of the *Kitāb-i-Hind*. The second group includes Sohan Lāl Sūrī of the *Umdat-ut-Tawārīkh*, Būte Shāh of the *Tārīkh-i-Punjab*, Munshī Abdul Karīm of the *Tuhsat-ul-Ahbāb*, Ganesh Dās Vadehrā of the *Chār-Bāgh-i-Punjab*, Muftī Alī-ud-Dīn of the *Ibrat Nāmāh*, Rattan Chand Bal of the *Khālis Nāmāh* and the respective authors of the *Bhagat Māl* and the *Gulgasht-i-Punjab*.

In the first group Ghulām Alī Khān's *Imād-us-Saādat* merits considerable attention. The author belonged to a leading family of his times. His father was physician to Shāh Ālam and tutor to Prince Akbar. The fall of Delhī in 1807 before the Rohillāhs compelled his forcible expulsion from Delhī at the age of eight and, after several vicissitudes, he returned to Oudh in 1807 and entered the service of John Baillie, the personal representative of the British ruler, George III, at the Nawāb's court. Under his active patronage<sup>22</sup> and support he first completed *Imād-us-Saādat* in 1808 and then wrote an account of the third battle of Pānīpat called *Nigār-Nāmāh-i-Hind*. *Imād-us-Saādat* is primarily a history of Burhān-ul-Mulk Saādat Khān and his successors. The author was a young and promising scholar and had seen for himself the pangs of the crumbling Mughal empire. By 1808, the Sikhs had firmly established themselves in the Punjab and were negotiating political settlements with the British on equal footing. Ghulām Alī Khān was a staunch Muslim. However, he was rarely swayed by fanatical considerations to misrepresent the available facts. Of course, his account of Gurū Nānak is very elementary. He acknowledges the Gurū's spiritual status and says that he was blessed with enlightenment after ceaseless worship of the Lord Almighty. The importance of his comments, however, lies in his assessment of the impact of Gurū Nānak's teachings on the whole of India. After his expulsion from Delhī, his sojourns in Hyderābād (Deccan) and Chinapatam<sup>23</sup> had, perhaps, brought him face to face with a large number of Sikhs who had, by that time, penetrated deep into the

south. He was evidently impressed by the widespread response of the people to the Gurū's teachings. By making an emphatic reference to the saying *Das Bābar de, das Bābe de*,<sup>24</sup> he was, in fact, anxious to bring into limelight the pre-eminence of the Gurū.

From 1808 onwards we enter upon a period which, on the political side, witnessed the rise of the Sikhs as a great military power and on the cultural side, which produced a band of experienced scholars devoted to the writing of history of the Sikhs. In this series of writers Bakht Mal attracts our attention first. His father was a Kashmīrī Pandit who had migrated to Lāhore in search of a job. He attained a high position but, with the dismissal of the governor of Lāhore, he was compelled to seek his fortunes elsewhere. He went to Delhī where Bakht Mal was, probably, born. In 1805, when Lord Lake drove Jaswant Rāo Holkar to Beās and deputed John Malcolm on a mission tour to the court of Ranjīt Singh, Bakht Mal accompanied Malcolm and wrote for his information an account of the Sikhs entitled *Khālsāh Nāmāh*. This he had prepared on the basis of information he had acquired from Bhāi Lāl Singh of Kaithal. Unfortunately his previous attempt at giving a detailed account of the Sikhs had been foiled by the thieves who carried away a part of the manuscript. Another short history was then prepared by the author but, unluckily for him, this was carried away by John Malcolm to London, who produced on the basis of this history his own account of the Sikhs entitled *Sketch of the Sikhs* (London, 1812). Bakht Mal was evidently a scholar of considerable merit. His grandson Dīwān Amar Nāth credits him with the authorship of the following works also: (1) *Talism-ī-Shakar-riz*, (2) *Bāgh-i-bābahār*, (3) *Lui Nāmāh*, (4) *Singh Nāmāh*.

*Khālsāh Nāmāh* was completed in 1814. It deals with the history of the Sikhs up to 1807-8. It is significant for the historical evidence that we can gather from his account of Gurū Nānak. Though admittedly motivated by pecuniary<sup>25</sup> as well as worldly considerations—he was writing for his British patron—the author did not allow too much of subjective considerations to creep into his narration. Secondly, since his British patron was not interested in listening to miraculous tales, the author did not concern himself with this aspect of the evidence<sup>26</sup> available to him from the Janamsākhīs or from hearsay accounts. If ever he was compelled to make a reference to these he did it only to elucidate his point. Thirdly, the main point that he made out is that Gurū Nānak's universal popularity was due to his limitless faith in the

unity of the Godhead,<sup>27</sup> to his love of peace and to his friendship<sup>28</sup> for all irrespective of class and creed. The author also makes reference to the importance of *Nām*<sup>29</sup> which was everywhere emphasized by the Gurū for the spiritual enlightenment of the people.

Another equally important, though temperamentally different, scholar of this decade was Khushwaqt Rāi whose *Tawārīkh-i-Sikhān*, composed in A.D. 1811, has naturally elicited much appreciation because of the continued account it gives of the Sikhs from the birth of Gurū Nānak up to A. D. 1811. The author has not assigned any formal title to his work. However, in the preface he calls it *Guzārīsh-i-ahwāl-i-Bidat-i-firqāh-i-Sikhān wā paighambrān-i-eshān-b-trīq-i-intikhāb-u-mujmal*. Before evaluating his comments on Gurū Nānak the following facts must be borne in mind. Firstly, according to H. T. Prinsep, Khushwaqt Rāi was for many years the agent and intelligencer of the British Government at Amritsar where he had been appointed official news-writer, i.e. *Waqāi Nigār*.<sup>30</sup> Secondly, he wrote his work at the request of Colonel (afterwards, General) Sir David Ochterlony and also made available a copy of it to Charles Theophilus Metcalfe (afterwards, Lord Metcalfe). Thirdly, he employed the term *bidat* for the Sikh movement. This term has, no doubt, several meanings, i.e. novelty, innovation in matters of religion, heresy, schism, wrong, violence, oppression, outrage, strife and quarrel. As Bakht Mal's objectivity has, in Khushwaqt Rāi's account of the Sikhs, been replaced by the author's naked subjectivity, we are left in no doubt about Khushwaqt Rāi's intentions in calling the Sikh movement a *bidat*, a term which is contemptuously used in India for describing something which is evil. This view is supported by his subsequent references to the Sikh Gurūs. However, his account of Gurū Nānak makes a romantic reading. He has relied almost exclusively on the Janamsākhīs and has described some prominent tales relating to the life of the Gurū. He has sought to make out that Gurū Nānak cursed the Lodīs for Ibrāhīm's ill-treatment of the Gurū and blessed Bābar who, consequent upon his blessings, acquired sovereignty in India and continued to hold Bābājī ( the Gurū ) in high esteem. Love, service<sup>31</sup> and sacrifice were some of the important features of Gurū Nānak's teachings to which Kushwaqt Rāi has alluded to in his narrative.

Ahmad Shāh Batālvī is the last scholar of the first category. His *Kitāb-i-Hind : Bayān Ahwāl-i-Mulk-i-Hind wā Malūk-i-ān az Zamān-i-Qadīm* was completed, probably, in A.D. 1824. *Zikr-i-Gurūān, Ibtidā-i-Singhān wā-Mazhab-i-eshān* is only a section of this work which has

been printed as an appendix to the first volume of Sohan Lāl Sūrī's *Umdat-ut-Tawārīkh*. He was a man of great erudition and had also acquired considerable spiritual eminence for being the religious head of the famous Qādariyā sect of the Muslims of Batālā. Besides, he was blessed with an immense amount of diplomatic shrewdness. That is why he could maintain a highly successful liaison both with the British and with Mahārājā Ranjīt Singh. It was, perhaps, because of these attributes that Captain Wade spotted him out for writing a history of the Punjāb and of the Sikhs. His work contains an account of the Sikhs up to 1824. His comments on Gurū Nānak are found in the section attached to the *Umdat-ut-Tawārīkh* as an appendix. Except for tracing the origin of the Sodhī and the Bedī sub-castes of the Khatrī tribe and describing Bābā Buddhā's meeting with Gurū Nānak, Ahmad Shāh has not given much new information about the Founder of Sikhism. However, his descriptions of the general character of the Sikhs of his own time, which form a part of his account of Gurū Nānak, are very significant and worth studying both for the ennobling<sup>32</sup> aspect of their character as well as for the decline that was gradually making itself felt in the general community.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The relevant extracts from these works on Gurū Nānak have been edited and translated into Punjābī with an introduction by me in my book, *Masī dā Namāzī Gurū Bābā Nānak*, published by Punjābī University, Patialā (March 1970). In most cases the references have been taken from this book.
2. At the conclusion of his work, Ardistanī writes : "Whatever in this work treating of the religions of different countries is stated concerning the creed of different sects has been taken from their books, and for the accounts of the persons belonging to any particular sect, the author's information was imparted to him by their adherents and sincere friends, and recorded literally so that no trace of partiality nor aversion might be perceived"—*Nānak Panthīs* (1940).
3. *Ibid.*, p. 20, fn. 38.
4. *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib*, Nawal Kishore Press, Kānpur (A.H. 1321), p. 223.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 224.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 225, 237.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 233.
8. *Loc. cit.*
9. *Loc. cit.*

10. *Ibid.*, p. 223.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 233.
12. *Loc. cit.*
13. Sujān Rāi, *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārikh* (Persian), Delhi (1918), pp. 69-70.
14. *Loc. cit.*
15. *Loc. cit.*
16. Nand Lāl Goyā, *Jot Bikās*, tr. in *Mastī dā Namāzī Gurū Bābā Nānak*, pp. 31, 33.
17. Nand Lāl Goyā, *Arzul Alfāz*, tr. in *Mastī dā Namāzī*, pp. 34, 35.
18. *Mastī dā Namāzī*, p. 36, fn. 1.
19. *Risālāh-i-Nānak Shāh*, tr. in *Mastī dā Namāzī*, p. 39.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
21. *Loc. cit.*
22. *Ibid.*, p. 13
23. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
24. *Loc. cit.*
25. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
26. *Loc. cit.*
27. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
28. *Loc. cit.*
29. *Loc. cit.*
30. *Origin of the Sikh Power in the Punjāb*, Calcuttā, 1834, preface, p. x.
31. *Mastī dā Namāzī*, p. 50.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 58.



## A CONTEMPORARY JESUIT DOCUMENT ON GURŪ ARJUN DEV'S MARTYRDOM

E. R. HAMBYE S. J.

Thanks to the kind suggestion of my friend, Dr Gandā Singh, I have succeeded in finding back the original text of a Jesuit letter which touches upon the last months of Gurū Arjun Dev's life. It all focusses on the revolt of Prince Khusru against his father, Emperor Jahāngīr, who had succeeded Akbar on October 17, 1605, and the unexpected catastrophe that led to the martyrdom of the Gurū.<sup>1</sup>

The content of the letter was rearranged and published in the *Annual Relation*, 1606-1607 (Part IV, Book III, Ch. V, fos 148-151r) prepared by Father Ferdinand Guerreiro s. j. (d. 1617), and published in Lisbon in 1609. It was reprinted in Coimbra in 1931, vol. II, pp. 366-370. It is this reprint which I have been able to consult.<sup>2</sup>

Again, the story of the short-lived encounter between Prince Khusru and Gurū Arjun Dev, the Fifth Sikh Gurū, with its terrible consequences was made known to the English-speaking public by C. H. Payne, in his publication *Jahāngīr And The Jesuits* (London, 1930, pp. 1-12; passage on the Gurū, pp. 11-12). Not only did Payne translate Guerreiro almost completely, but he could make use of the original text of the letter; thanks to this opportunity, he was able to add valuable notes to Guerreiro's translation (notes 10, 15-18, 20). Payne's notes and comparative approach proved that Guerreiro, though faithful in the main to the original text, did sometimes change the place of its paragraphs, as is the case with the narrative describing Khusru's meeting with Gurū Arjun Dev.

Finally, the original text of the letter, written from Lāhore on September 25, 1606, by Father Jerome Xavier s. j., is found today amongst the Marsden Manuscripts of the British Museum (B. M. Add. MSs, 9854, ff. 38r-52r). This collection of Jesuit Indian sources gathered by W. Marsden was presented by him to the famous London library in 1835.<sup>3</sup> As late as 1963, it was published by the Lisbon Centre of Oversea Historical Studies, in vol. III of its collection entitled *Oversea Portuguese Documentation*,<sup>4</sup> pp. 62-91. Since I found amongst the papers of the late

H. Hosten s. j. a typescript of the whole letter, I could compare it with the published text; it helped making some corrections in the typescript.

Father Jerome Xavier s. j. was one of the grandnephews of St Francis Xavier. He was born in 1549, became a Jesuit in 1568, reached Goā in September, 1581, and worked in India for forty years. He was regarded as an influential personality, since he held several important charges until he was selected for working at the Mughal court : master of novices in Goā, rector of the Bassein College, rector of the Cochīn College, and superior of the main Jesuit House in Goā.<sup>5</sup> He spent twenty years at the Mughal court, mostly, though not exclusively, in Āgrā. There his many-sided gifts were put to good use, and, besides his recognized spiritual leadership, he became a remarkable scholar in Persian.<sup>6</sup> After having left Āgrā for good in 1615, he spent some months at the Jesuit College of Chaul, before he was appointed rector of the St Paul's College in Old Goā. There he died on June 27, 1617, suffocated by the fire which had engulfed his room and his bed. He had just then been elected archbishop of Cranganor, in modern Kerala, an important office at that time since he would have become the leader responsible for the welfare of the well-known St Thomas Christians of Mālābār.<sup>7</sup>

The first establishment of the Jesuits in Lāhore dates back to May, 1595. Since 1597, the four of five Jesuits of the Mughal empire divided their attention between Āgrā and Lāhore, without speaking of the one or two who followed Akbar in his journeys to Kashmīr and to the Deccan. A small church, with its attached house, was opened in Lāhore in 1597. Under Jahāngīr, who tarried there until 1608, their possessions in Lāhore were confirmed, and a cemetery was soon added to them. All these were finally destroyed in 1633. However, by the middle of the seventeenth century the Jesuits still had a house, if not some houses, in the city; its ground floor was used for holding their religious services, yet the Fathers did not reside permanently in Lāhore any more.<sup>8</sup>

I will be satisfied here with translating those sections of the letter which bear upon our subject. Its language is Portuguese, though Jerome Xavier was of course a Spaniard by birth and upbringing. In order to present the relevant passages in their true perspective, both a short introduction and a summary of what is left out from the translation are also given here.

The letter, addressed to the Jesuit Provincial Superior of Goā,<sup>9</sup> covers most of the pastoral and other activities of the Jesuits working in Lāhore

(Fathers Emmanuel Pinheiro and Francis Corsi), and of those of Āgrā (Father Anthony Machado and the author himself). It is a private letter, as distinguished from the more official Annual Letters which each Jesuit house and each Jesuit province were expected to send to their respective major superiors (the provincial in Goā, or the general in Rome) at the end of every year.<sup>10</sup>

Jerome Xavier begins by giving various news concerning the life led by the few existing Christians in both the cities. Then he turns his attention to the political scene : Akbar's death and the Father's relation with the emperor during his last illness; his funeral and Jahāngīr's assumption of power; the revolt of Khusru (written as *Xhocero* in Portuguese), his flight from Āgrā and journey to Lāhore; Khusru's defeat by Jahāngīr and his attempt to go over to Kābul; Jahāngīr's arrival (May 8, 1606), while learning of the capture of his son, and his greeting by the two Jesuits present there on his way to the fort; Jerome Xavier had left Āgrā for Lāhore five days after Jahāngīr; arrival of the captive Khusru in irons; the treatment meted out to his accomplices, and the execution of one of them; meeting of Jerome Xavier with Jahāngīr, and his reception by his Jesuit confreres and the local Christians after eight years of absence; the killing of the Prince's soldiers; Jahāngīr's procession through Lāhore with his prisoner son; further punishment of the latter's associates.<sup>11</sup>

Then begins the passage which interests us here :<sup>12</sup>

(fo. 43r)...When the Prince [Khusru] was flying from Āgrā, he passed through a place where was living a man whom they call the Gurū of the gentiles, as amongst us the Bishop and Pope, of theirs. He was held as a saint and venerated as their universal head, and the Prince went to meet him. He asked him for some good omen. He gave it to him for the good of the newly reigning Prince, and put a *tikkā* on his head, although this one [the Gurū] was a gentile and the Prince a Moor; yet the Prince was the son of a gentile woman. Thus, owing to the opinion [the Prince] had of the saintliness of that [Gurū] he took that mark as a sign of the good success of his undertaking.

When the king had the Prince in his hands, he sent for the said Gurū, held him prisoner, and some gentiles interceded for their saint. Finally he was condemned [to pay] more than 1,00,000 *cruzados*,<sup>13</sup> and a rich gentile begged the mercy of the king, coming forward to stand credit for the said Gurū, I say for that money;

the king handed him [the Gurū] over to him [the rich gentile]. It appears that the rich gentile hoped for some interventions to succeed in remitting also the fine. He was mistaken...he gave every day new torments to his (fo. 44.2) saint. He ordered to give him much torture...he took away his food, he did him thousand and one dishonours. In that way their good Pope died, overwhelmed by the sufferings, torments and dishonours...

The rest of the letter deals with the following points : Emperor Jahāngīr's treatment of Gurū Arjun's son, reorganization of the judiciary; difficulties of keeping the church and the house of the Fathers in Lāhore; short description of the same; story of an Armenian Christian and his sons : the latter had been forcibly circumcized in spite of their refusal to accept Islām, but their constancy won the day; the embassy to the king of Portugal with the author as assistant; Christians and Christianity in Āgrā and Lāhore; news of Brother Bento de Goes s.j.<sup>14</sup> from Yarkand; story of various foreign Christians and their difficulties, especially two African Christians (=Cafres), and relations with Jahāngīr about the latter; such other topics as the printing of Persian books, help to poor Christians, the Persian translation of the Gospels and their corrections.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. On Gurū Arjun Dev, Khusru and Jahāngīr, see M. A. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, Oxford, 1909, vol. III, pp. 84-85, 90-100 (traditional account from Sikh sources); L. R. Krishna, *Les Sikhs* (doctoral thesis for the Sorbonne), Paris, 1932, pp. 78-79.
2. *Relacao Anual das Coisas que Fizeram os Padres da Companhia de Jesus nas sua Missoes...nos Anos de 1600 a 1609...pelo Padre Fernao Guerreiro*. Nova Edicao dirigida e prefaciada por Artur Viegas. Tomo Segundo 1604 a 1606, Coimbra, Imprensa da Universidade, 1931.
3. E. Maclagan, *The Jesuits and the Great Mogul*, London, 1932, p. 16; H. Hosten s.j. "The Marsden MSS. in the British Museum," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 6 (1910), pp. 437-61.
4. *Documentacao Ultramarina Portuguesa*, Lisbon, Centro de Estudos Historicos Ultramarinos.
5. Called the *Casa Profesa*, or house for the professed Fathers, those particularly bound to keep up the strict ideals of the order. Flanking the Bom Jesu Church-

Basilica—where are kept the relics of St Francis Xavier—in Old Goā, it is the only Jesuit house to have escaped in the main the ravages of time.

6. This capital aspect of Jerome Xavier's achievements has been well studied by A. Camps O.F.M. in his book, *Jerome Xavier s.j. and the Muslims of the Mogul Empire, Controversial Works and Missionary Activity*, Beckenried (Switzerland), 1957. Jerome Xavier was really the founder of the so-called third Jesuit Mission to Akbar, which turned into a lasting establishment. During his stay in northern India, he was also the superior of his confreres.
7. On Jerome Xavier's life and work, especially at the Mughal court, one can consult, besides A. Camps' book just mentioned (pp. 1-13), the older account of E. Maclagan (*op. cit.*, pp. 50-84) and the recent one of A. S. Hernandez s.j., *Jeronimo Javier s.j., Apostol del Gran Mogol y Arzobispo Electo de Cranganor, en la India* (in Spanish), Pamplona, 1958.
8. E. Maclagan, *op. cit.*, pp. 319-22, 329; A.S. Hernandez s.j., *op. cit.*, pp. 205-16.
9. The province of India (actually of the East Indies, or of Goā), with its centre in Goā, was established by St Ignatius of Loyola himself on October 10, 1549 (*Documenta Indica*, ed. J. Wicki s.j., Rome, 1948, vol. I, pp. 22, 509-10); it originally covered regions as far apart as India, Ethiopia and Japan. In 1601, the original unity, as far as India proper was concerned, was divided into two provinces; the old province of Goā for northern and central India; and a new province of Mālābār (vice-province in 1601, full-fledged province in 1605) for Southern, Eastern and North-eastern India. The provincial superior of Goā, on which depended the mission to the Great Mughal, was Father Gaspar Fernandes s. j., when Jerome Xavier wrote his letter on the beginnings of Jahāngīr's reign.
10. On the character and features of such letters, consult J. Correia-Afonso s.j., *Jesuit Letters and Indian History*, Bombay, 1955, pp. 11-31.
11. Some of the important narratives of the period, particularly on Khusru's revolt, are found in H.M. Elliot-J. Dowson, *The History of India as told by its own Historians—The Muhammadan Period*, London, 1875, vol. VI, pp. 264-74, 291-302.
12. The Khusru's affair as reported by Jerome Xavier has been summarized by A.S. Hernandez s.j., *op. cit.*, pp. 207-210, omitting however the paragraphs on the Gurū.
13. The *cruzado* was the gold coin struck in Goā since about 1512, then valued 420 *reïs*; it remained the most common highest denomination, though later on in course of the 16th century such higher gold coins as the *S. Tome* valued 1,000 *reïs*, and the *Portuguez* of 4,500 *reïs*, or others of lower worth like the *Pardao* of 360 *reïs*, and the *Xerafim* of 300 *reïs* also existed amongst the Portuguese. (J. Gerson da Cunha, *Contribucoes para o Estudo da Numismatica Indoportuguesa*, Lisbon, 1955, pp. 36 ff.). According to Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, p. 91, the fine charged on the Gurū was two *lakh* of rupees; Xavier says only more than 1,00,000 *cruzados*. I have been unable to find out what would be the present-day

value of such a sum.

14. Bento de Goes s.j. was a Portuguese Jesuit brother (one who does not seek priestly orders) who succeeded in reaching Eastern China from India via Peshawar, Kābul, Eastern Turkestan and Central Asia; he died barely a fortnight after having come to the Chinese town of Sucheu. See C. Wessels s. j., *Early Jesuit Travellers in Central Asia*, The Hague, 1924, pp. 1-42; W. Schoenberger s. j., *Garlic for Pegasus: Life of Brother Bento de Goes of the Society of Jesus*, Westminster (Md), 1955.

## AURANGZEB AND THE SIKH GURŪS

A. C. BANERJEE

### I

There was no confrontation between Gurū Hargobind and the Mughal Government during the later years of his life. It is possible that there was some relaxation of tension on the part of the Mughal authorities as a result of Dārā's growing influence in the imperial court. Whatever the reason might be, the Mughal Government did not strike any blow at the Sikhs after the battle of Kartārpur (1634) and Sikh military organization could develop along the lines indicated by Gurū Hargobind. As Cunningham says, "The circumstance of the Gooroo's military array does not appear to have struck Mohsun Fānee as strange or unusual, and his work, the *Dabistān*, does not therefore endeavour to account for it." The legacy was taken over by Gurū Har Rāi whose court is said to have displayed "the pomp and circumstances of a semi-independent military chieftain."<sup>1</sup> Although "the enmity with the Turks had ceased," it was considered necessary to keep the community in a state of defence; there was a potential threat even if there was no actual danger. But Gurū Har Rāi carefully avoided conflict with the Mughal Government. Indeed, friendly relations were established with the imperial court; Sikh tradition tells us that Dārā's life was on one occasion saved by a medicine received from the Gurū.<sup>2</sup> It is said that Dārā "paid him visits of respect in the course of his general devotion to Sādhūs."<sup>3</sup>

Had this liberal prince succeeded to the imperial throne, there might have been a revival of Akbar's policy of friendly patronage in Mughal-Sikh relations; but Aurangzeb's victory in the war of succession gave a new turn to history. It is probably not unlikely that his intolerance in religious matters would have provoked a confrontation with the Sikhs sooner or later; but a crisis was precipitated immediately by Gurū Har Rāi's involvement in the war. The nature of that involvement is, however, far from certain. According to Sikh tradition, Dārā contacted

the Gurū during his wanderings in the Punjāb after his flight from Delhi following the battle of Sāmūgarh (May, 1658) and met him on the right bank of the Beās. The Gurū advised him to go to Lāhore, "collect an army and obtain as many allies as possible." Next morning Dārā was informed that Aurangzeb's army was pursuing him. Without loss of time he departed from Lāhore "requesting the Gurū to impede its progress as much as possible." The Sikh sources do not tell us whether the Gurū took any measures in compliance with this request.<sup>4</sup> The meeting took place probably at Goindwāl in July, 1658. Sir J. N. Sarkār, relying apparently on the Sikh tradition that the Gurū gave Dārā encouragement and advice, observes, "... The Gurū had blessed the prince when a fugitive in the Punjāb after the battle of Sāmūgarh."<sup>5</sup>

An entirely different version is given by Sujān Rāi in his *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārikh*. He says, "When after his defeat Dārā Shukoh came to Lāhore he became very much afraid of his brother and made up his mind to flee to Multān and (then to) Kandāhār. Gurū Har Rāi, who had come with a large army, left his camp with the plea that he was going to collect more troops for him."<sup>6</sup> The implication is that the Gurū came with "a large army" to Dārā's camp at Lāhore and, finding that he was being deserted by his other friends, left him to his fate on a false pretext. Although Indubhūsan Banerjee attaches considerable importance to Sujān Rāi's work because "in point of time it is the nearest of the materials we have and . . . records independent evidence,"<sup>7</sup> one cannot believe that the Gurū gave Dārā assurance which he had no intention to fulfil. Moreover, the Gurū's alleged march "with a big army" to meet the prince is entirely inconsistent with his character and the policy which he had hitherto pursued. The initiative for the meeting obviously came from Dārā who was in danger and needed spiritual and mental comfort; it would have been a risky adventure for the Gurū to offer him military cooperation at this stage. Moreover, from what we know about Dārā's movements in July-August, 1658, it is improbable that the meeting took place at Lāhore. If it took place at Goindwāl, the initiative must have been taken by Dārā.

Trumpp, who usually rejects Sikh traditional versions and takes a critical view of the Gurū's activities, says that Gurū Har Rāi actually joined Dārā with his Sikhs.<sup>8</sup> Irvine says that the Gurū "joined the standard of Dārā," but he does not explicitly tell us whether the Gurū really gave the prince any military aid.<sup>9</sup> Gokul Chand Nārang goes further and says, "The Gurū sent out a detachment of his men who



contested the passage of the Beās with Aurangzeb's troops, and prevented them from crossing the river until Dārā had reached a place of comparative safety."<sup>10</sup> No authority has been quoted for this statement, but it appears to be connected with the complaints which were later made to Aurangzeb against Gurū Har Rāi. These are thus summarized by Macauliffe : "The Gurū, it was said, had met Dārā Shukoh, blessed him, and assisted him in opposing the Emperor; and it was also reported that he was preaching a religion distinct from Islām, and performing miracles in evidence of his divine mission."<sup>11</sup> It seems that Nārang accepted the first allegation as true and read it in conjunction with Dārā's alleged request that the Gurū might impede the progress of the pursuing army sent by Aurangzeb. Even the *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārikh* does not say that the Gurū actually gave the fugitive prince military aid in any form; indeed, it states that the Gurū "left his camp with the plea that he was going to collect more troops for him." Cunningham leaves us in a state of uncertainty; the Gurū "remained in peace," he says, "until he was induced, in 1658-59, to take part, of a nature not distinctly laid down, with Dārā Shukoh, in the struggle between him and his brothers for the empire of India." The silence of the Persian sources on this episode in the war of succession explains our difficulty. Cunningham says that the Gurū's leaning towards Dārā is given on the authority of native account only, but it is highly probable in itself, considering Dārā's personal character and religious principles. It would not be correct to equate "leaning" with military aid.

It was hardly to be expected that Aurangzeb would overlook any help given to Dārā. Persecution of non-Muslims and destruction of temples were regular features of his administration even before his seizure of the imperial throne. For instance, in 1645, when he was the viceroy of Gujarāt, he desecrated the temple of Chintāman at Ahmedābād and converted it into a mosque. He pursued a similar policy as viceroy of the Deccan. Virtually unlimited opportunities for displaying such religious zeal were available after his accession to the throne. In 1659 he ordered that existing temples should not be demolished, but no new ones should be allowed to be built. This moderate policy was reversed in 1669 when the governors of all provinces were ordered to demolish the schools and temples of the infidels and strongly put down their teaching and religious practices. In 1670, the governor of Orissā was ordered to pull down all the temples, including even clay huts built during the last ten or twelve years, and to allow no old temples to be

repaired. As Sir J. N. Sarkār says, "A systematic plan was followed for carrying out the policy of iconoclasm. Officers were appointed in all the subdivisions and cities of the Empire...to enforce the regulations of Islām...The destruction of Hindū places of worship was one of their chief duties, and so large was the number of officers employed in the task that a Director-General had to be placed over them to guide their activity."<sup>12</sup> Did the Sikhs escape the wide sweep of this policy of persecution? We learn from Khāfī Khān that "Aurangzeb ordered temples of the Sikhs to be destroyed and the Gurū's agents (*masands*) for collecting the tithe and presents of the faithful to be expelled from the cities."<sup>13</sup> But there is no reference in the Sikh sources to the destruction of Sikh temples at Amritsar, Kiratpur and Ānandpur.

Aurangzeb's policy towards non-Muslims had not developed fully during Gurū Har Rāi's pontificate, but his performance in Gujarāt and in the Deccan as also his order of 1659 indicated the shape which it would take after consolidation of his regime. Immediately after his accession he had a special reason to look into the affairs of the Sikhs : the Gurū's contact with Dārā—whatever its exact nature might be—could hardly be ignored in view of its political implications. But the Emperor adopted what, in the context of his own principles and the precedent laid down by Jahāngīr, might be regarded as a very soft policy. According to Sikh tradition, a two-fold complaint was made to him against Gurū Har Rāi : "The Gurū," it was said, "had met Dārā Shukoh, blessed him, and assisted him in opposing the Emperor ; and it was also reported that he was preaching a religion distinct from Islām, and performing miracles in evidence of his divine mission."<sup>14</sup> These charges were similar to those which had been levelled against Gurū Arjun; a political offence was coupled with a religious offence. But Aurangzeb's policy was too lenient in comparison with that of his grandfather. He summoned Gurū Har Rāi to answer for his conduct. The Sikh version of the story is confused and not free from miracles,<sup>15</sup> but it seems pretty clear that the Gurū sent his eldest son Rām Rāi to the imperial court to explain his position.

Rām Rāi was quite young—barely 14 years old. Although he was instructed by the Gurū "not in any way to recede from the principles of his religion," he—not unnaturally—lost himself in the whirlpool of the imperial court. He performed miracles; what was worse, he did not hesitate even to alter one of Gurū Nānak's hymns to escape the Emperor's wrath. This was done at a meeting of Muslim priests held

for the purpose of interrogating Rām Rāi on the principles of his religion. The hymn in question, composed by the founder of Sikhism, appeared to offend Muslim sentiment :

The clay of a Muslim's grave,  
 Falls into the hands of the potter;  
 Pots and bricks out of it he makes;  
 In the fire burns the poor clay.  
 As it burns it weeps and wails,  
 Shedding tears of cinders at its fate.  
 Says Nānak : God the Creator  
 Who is the Causer of all the causes,  
 Knows where departs and what befalls  
 The soul of man hereafter.<sup>16</sup>

The real meaning of the hymn is that the soul of man leaves the body and does not remain in the grave, as the Semitic faiths believe, till doomsday; the graves of poor men are often dismantled by potters who make pots out of clay, while the fate of the soul is known only to God.<sup>17</sup> Instead of explaining what Gurū Nānak meant by the hymn, Rām Rāi sought to gratify the Emperor by saying that the text had been corrupted by ignorant persons and that the word *musalmān* had been put in place of *beīmān*. This explanation satisfied the Emperor and the Muslim priests, but it offended Gurū Har Rāi when the matter was reported to him by the Sikhs of Delhī. He decided that Rām Rāi had disqualified himself for the Gurūship by his "unnecessary exhibition of miracles" and mutilation of a hymn of Gurū Nānak. He disinherited his unworthy son, saying that the Gurūship "is like a tigress's milk which can only be contained in a golden cup."<sup>18</sup> Apart from its effect on the future of Rām Rāi and the solidarity of the Sikh community, this episode raises an important issue: why should Rām Rāi be interrogated, not on the subject of his father's alleged military aid to Dārā, but only on the interpretation of a hymn which appeared to be offensive to Muslim sentiment? Apparently the political issue was ignored and the whole affair was given a religious complexion. Neither Gokul Chand Nārang nor Sir J. N. Sarkār has noticed the religious aspect of Aurangzeb's policy towards Gurū Har Rāi.

The Emperor, however, did not consider the Guru's offence serious enough to deserve any punishment, not to speak of the cruel penalty which his grandfather had inflicted on Gurū Arjun. This seems to confirm the view that Gurū Har Rāi's sympathy for Dārā did not

extend to military aid. But the Emperor adopted a precautionary measure; Rām Rāi was detained in Delhī, probably as a security for his father's good behaviour. According to Cunningham, the Gurū had to surrender his elder son as a hostage. It is also possible that the Emperor wanted to make the future Gurū of the Sikhs amenable to Mughal influence through close contact with the imperial court. Rām Rāi himself thought that his father might be persuaded to change his mind, as his visit to Kīratpur implied. He is also said to have requested Dhīr Mal to intercede for him with the Gurū. He went to Lāhore to organize support for his claim to succession.<sup>19</sup> Neither Rām Rāi himself nor his friends at the imperial court probably thought that his cause was really doomed to failure. His succession to the Gurūship was very desirable from the Mughal point of view. The organizational solidarity of the Sikhs was a potential threat to imperial authority; they had evolved a peculiar system of self-government. Mohsin Fānī\* noted that they had accustomed themselves to the Government of a *masand*, or deputy, under the Gurū.<sup>20</sup> Aurangzeb could hardly have been unaware of this feature of the Sikh system; it is possible that as Governor of Multān and Sind during the years 1648-65 he had some opportunity of coming into contact with the Sikhs. It was natural for him to think of establishing a system of remote control over this growing community.

Rām Rāi was too young and inexperienced to see through the crafty Emperor's design. He was so elated by marks of imperial favour that "he gave himself airs as if he had been already appointed governor of a province." The statements attributed to him in later Sikh records might be interpolations inspired by the anti-Rām Rāi tradition, but it seems to be fairly clear that the Emperor expected to find in him a pliant tool in his dealings with the Sikh community. The eldest son's exclusion from inheritance was obviously connected with his activities in Aurangzeb's court. Macauliffe says, "The Gurū then passing in review the whole of Rām Rāi's conduct since his arrival in Delhī, his treachery to his faith, unnecessary exhibition of miracles, and his long absence decided that he was not fit for Gurūship."<sup>21</sup> It seems that in the words "long absence" we have a covert allusion to Rām Rāi's position as a hostage and his submission to imperial influence.

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\* Author of *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib*. Scholars now attribute the work to Mobid Zulfikār Ardistanī. See Gurbux Singh's article "Persian Writings on Gurū Nānak."

Aurangzeb's political strategy had a temporary setback because Rām Rāi was disinherited by Gurū Har Rāi. But the Emperor's continuing interest in Rām Rāi became evident when he allowed him to go to Kīratpur to endeavour to induce his father to reverse his decision regarding succession. Why should the Emperor allow the "hostage" to leave Delhī? The obvious answer is that he wanted to utilize the "hostage" as his tool. That he favoured Rām Rāi was widely known, and Rām Rāi himself advertised this fact. This was one of the reasons for which "men who had previously not been Sikhs now became his disciples and espoused his cause." Some *masands* also joined him in the hope that imperial patronage would ultimately place him on the Gurū's *takht*. But Gurū Har Rāi did not change his decision; Rām Rāi, he declared, "was blinded by the love of self when he so far forgot himself as to alter a word in a hymn of Gurū Nānak to please the Emperor."<sup>22</sup>

## II

The premature death of Gurū Har Rāi and the succession of his nominee, Har Krishan, who was barely six years old, placed the Sikh community in a situation which was comparable to the crisis of 1606 and 1675. Rām Rāi was at the Emperor's court in Delhī when at Kīratpur his younger brother was appointed to Gurūship. He proclaimed himself Gurū, apparently with the connivance of his supporters in the imperial court and in expectation of their support, and with the aid of a few self-seeking *masands*. Imperial policy had obviously succeeded in creating dissensions within the Sikh community. But Rām Rāi's plan did not succeed; when he sent his *masands* to bring him the offerings of the faithful, they became "proud and rebellious, and kept the greater part of the offerings for themselves." Unable to escape from their grip, he laid his case before the Emperor, ascribing his misfortune to his obedience to him. In response to Rām Rāi's prayer the Emperor summoned Gurū Har Krishan to Delhī.<sup>23</sup> Thus the tide turned in favour of the Emperor's policy; both the claimants to the Gurūship were at the Mughal court as if it was a dispute about the appointment of a provincial governor. For the first time in history the Mughal Emperor managed to have a say in the matter of succession to the Gurūship of the Sikh *panth*.

Both Cunningham and Indubhūsan Banerjee ignore Aurangzeb's "politic" role in this episode. The former is completely silent about

mutilation of Gurū Nānak's hymn by Rām Rāi although he says that "the favour" shown to Rām Rāi by "the politic Aurangzeb is believed to have roused the jealousy of the father." Rām Rāi's exclusion from succession is explained by the statement that he was 'the off-spring of a handmaiden, and not of a wife of equal degree.' This is quite wrong; Rām Rāi and Har Krishan were born of the same mother, Sulakhnī.<sup>24</sup> Indubhūsan Banerjee suggests that Rām Rāi, "a mere boy in his early teens," and apparently unable to do anything "on his own initiative" was induced to make a bid for his father's *takht* by self-seeking *masands*.<sup>25</sup> That the *masands* had much to do with the contest is beyond doubt; but their greed and indiscipline do not explain Aurangzeb's appearance in the role of arbitrator in an issue which was an internal affair of the Sikh *panth*. Sikh tradition has attributed a very interesting soliloquy to the Emperor<sup>26</sup> which ends as follows : "...I have him [ Rām Rāi ] now in my power. There is yet another brother, of whose resistance to my designs I am equally apprehensive; but if I succeed in bringing him here, I may bribe him into acquiescence. If he obstinately resists, I will set both brothers at variance, and they shall die by mutual slaughter...The Sikhs will never suspect that I have put both brothers to death. I shall kill the snake without breaking my stick." This is the traditional Sikh interpretation of the Emperor's policy. Although it is no more than an imaginative reconstruction of the Emperor's thought processes, it fits in well, not only with his character, but also with those developments which we have narrated above.

In obedience to the imperial summons Gurū Har Krishan came to Delhi, encouraged probably by some sort of assurance from Mirzā Rājā Jai Singh of Amber;<sup>27</sup> but he died before the Emperor could have an interview with him. Before his death, however, Aurangzeb appears to have approved his succession to Gurū Har Rāi. Forster says, "The cause, it is said, terminated in permission being granted to the Sikhs to nominate their priest. When adjusting the contest they elected Hari Krishan."<sup>28</sup> Malcolm records the same tradition : "The dispute between his son Hari Krishan and Rām Rāi was referred to Delhi whither both the parties went and, by an Imperial decree of Aurangzeb, the Sikhs were allowed to elect their own priest. They chose Hari Krishan."<sup>29</sup> For the first—and the last—time the Emperor of Delhi had the opportunity of permitting the Sikhs 'to nominate their priest.' Only a few years earlier Mohsin Fānī had written, "The Gurū is chosen at the discretion of his followers."<sup>30</sup> In 1664 the internal dissensions of the Sikhs, stimulat-

ed by the Emperor through his patronage of Rām Rāi, compelled them in a way to surrender that "discretion" to him; the Muslim state acquired the right to interfere in what was strictly and exclusively an affair of the Sikh community.

Aurangzeb's attitude towards the Sikhs since Gurū Har Rāi's involvement in Dārā's affairs has certain curious features for which the available sources do not provide any satisfactory explanation. The Emperor who did not hesitate to inflict the heaviest punishment on two liberal thinkers of his own creed—Sarmad, the most celebrated Sūfī saint of the day, and Shāh Muhammad Badakhshī, a well-known disciple of Mīān Mīr and himself a mystic poet—did not try to punish either the Seventh or the Eighth Gurū. What is perhaps even more significant is his acceptance of Har Krishan in preference to Rām Rāi to whom he later extended official patronage.<sup>31</sup> The Emperor's conciliatory policy before and after the death of Gurū Har Krishan shows, it has been suggested, that he was "favourably inclined toward the Sikh movement up to this period."<sup>32</sup> This explanation can hardly be reconciled with Aurangzeb's religious and political views. He was not a seeker of religious truth like Akbar; he did not require the Seventh and Eighth Gurū's presence in Delhī for spiritual enlightenment.<sup>33</sup> His relations with Rām Rāi cannot be explained in terms of benevolent patronage which the Sikhs had received from Akbar. Why he pursued a policy of restraint is a question which cannot be satisfactorily answered until fresh source materials are available for scholarly scrutiny.

### III

Unlike his predecessors, Gurū Har Krishan did not name his successor; at the time of his death in Delhī he merely said, "*Bābā Bakāle,*" that is, his successor was to be found in the village of Bakālā, in Amritsar district. We do not know why he was not more precise. However, the Sikh community was torn by dissensions; it was not in a position to make a really unanimous choice. As many as twenty-two Sodhīs living at Bakālā claimed the right to succession, but a rich and influential Sikh trader named Makkhan Shāh found the true successor in Tegh Bahādur, the youngest son of Gurū Hargobind, who had been living in seclusion at that place for twenty years. The staunchest opposition came from Dhīr Mal, the eldest son of Gurdittā who was the eldest son of Gurū Hargobind. Disappointed in his plan to secure the Gurūship,

he even tried to have the new Gurū murdered through one of his agents named Shihān. Soon afterwards Gurū Tegh Bahādur went to Amritsar where he found the doors of the sacred temple (which was controlled by priests and *masands* owing their allegiance to the Mīnā Gurūs) shut against him. On his return to Kīratpur he advanced further towards the hills and laid the foundations of the city of Ānandpur at the village of Mākhowāl on the left bank of the Sutlej. But he did not stay there; he decided to go to the east and started about the middle of the year 1665. According to one view, the Gurū's purpose was "to avoid annoyance from his relations."<sup>34</sup> Another view is that he undertook a long missionary journey in the eastern regions which had not been visited by any successor of Gurū Nānak.<sup>35</sup> Gurū Gobind Singh makes a simple statement in the *Bachitra Nātak*: "He visited various places of pilgrimage."<sup>36</sup>

What is relevant for our present purpose is to inquire whether Aurangzeb took any interest in the affairs of the Sikhs during the years following Gurū Har Krishan's death. There is no evidence that he interfered in the succession dispute in 1664 or gave any direct or indirect support to Tegh Bahādur's principal rival, Dhīr Mal. But Cunningham, relying on Forster<sup>37</sup> and Malcolm,<sup>38</sup> says that Tegh Bahādur's supremacy and his life were both endangered by the machinations of Rām Rāi, and perhaps by his own suspicious proceedings. The Gurū, he continues, "was summoned to Delhī as a pretender to power and as a disturber of the peace," but he was saved by the intercession of the Mirzā Rājā Jai Singh of Jaipur, who promised to "take him with him on his approaching march to Bengāl." According to Malcolm, the Gurū suffered imprisonment for two years "in consequence of his nephew's misrepresentations." Even after his "release at the intercession of Jai Singh when he accompanied him to Bengāl" and established his abode at Patnā, he was "pursued with implacable rancour, by jealousy and ambition of Rām Rāi." At last he was "brought from Patnā" and finally "put to death without even the allegation of his crime." These stories are vitiated by confusion of dates and personalities. Mirzā Rājā Jai Singh never marched to Bengāl; he never had any occasion for intercession for the Gurū; he was in the Deccan when Gurū Tegh Bahādur started from the Punjāb for the east. His son, Rām Singh, was appointed to lead a Mughal expedition to Assam in 1667, long after Gurū Tegh Bahādur's departure from the Punjāb. There is no reference in the Sikh sources to the Gurū's imprisonment for two years.



Indeed, the story is contradicted by chronology : Tegh Bahādur succeeded to the Gurūship after the death of Gurū Har Krishan in April, 1664, and Gurū Gobind Singh was born at Patnā in December, 1666. Again, although Gurū Tegh Bahādur was put to death in Delhī in 1675, he had not been "brought from Patnā" for punishment; he had returned to the Punjāb from Patnā of his own accord four years earlier.

There is no evidence either of Rām Rāi's co-operation with Dhīr Mal<sup>39</sup> or of his responsibility — direct or indirect — for Gurū Tegh Bahādur's execution. He appears to have withdrawn from the contest for Gurūship after Gurū Har Krishan's death and concentrated his efforts on building up his own centre at Khairābād (later known as Dehrā Dūn) in Garhwāl where Aurangzeb granted him seven villages. Aurangzeb himself is said to have directed him—probably after Gurū Tegh Bahādur's martyrdom—"to retire to the wilderness of Doon and refrain from meddling in public affairs."<sup>49</sup> Rām Rāi and Gurū Gobind Singh probably met twice in 1686, first in Nāhan territory and then at Dehrā Dūn. Aurangzeb did not try to use Rām Rāi against either Gurū Tegh Bahādur or Gurū Gobind Singh. Probably he was satisfied with the developments after Gurū Har Krishan's death and felt that the Sikhs would be sufficiently weakened by internal dissensions. Indeed, he had nothing to fear from a Gurū who wandered from the Punjāb to Assam. For more than five years ( 1665-71 ) the Sikhs in the Punjāb were without a leader ; the remote control exercised by the Gurū from the distant east (where he had no recognized headquarters) could not have been very effective in promoting solidarity and strength. The greedy *masands* were active ; so were the dissentient sects : the Mīnās, the Dhīr-maliās, the Rām Rāyees. No wonder Aurangzeb found it unnecessary to keep his eyes fixed on a community which appeared to be disintegrating due to its own internal stress and strain. The Cooch Behār and Assam expeditions ( 1661-1670 ), the conquest of Chittāgong (1666), the Afghān war on the north-western frontier ( 1667-1676 ), the Jāt rebellion ( 1669 ), the Satnāmī rebellion ( 1672 ) and the expeditions against Shivājī, Bijāpur and Golkōndā ( 1660-1680 ) kept the Emperor fully occupied.

#### IV

Gurū Tegh Bahādur left Mākhowāl about the middle of 1665 and returned there towards the beginning of 1671. During the intervening

years, he travelled extensively in eastern Punjāb, Uttar Pradesh, Bihār, Bengāl and Orissā. Gurū Gobind Singh's brief statement in his *Bachitra Nātak* that in the east his father "visited various places of pilgrimage" should not be taken in a literal sense. It was not simply for the sake of visiting places of pilgrimage that the Gurū had undertaken arduous journeys in unknown lands. He carried on missionary work mainly in Bihār, Bengāl and Assam. But this work was interrupted to some extent by his association with the Mughal expedition against the Ahoms under the command of Rām Singh of Amber who was appointed to recover the imperial prestige in Assam in December, 1667. The exact nature of this association is a matter of controversy. Sir J. N. Sarkār says that he fought in the Mughal ranks.<sup>41</sup> Macauliffe narrates a long story depicting the Gurū as the peace-maker.<sup>42</sup> We are not directly concerned with this episode, for the Gurū's association with Rām Singh had nothing to do with the Emperor's policy. Mirzā Rājā Jai Singh and his son were friends and admirers of the Sikh Gurūs, and it was quite natural for Gurū Tegh Bahādur to support the latter by spiritual or material means. Aurangzeb personally had probably little or no information about the Gurū's activities in Bengāl and Assam.

In 1671, Gurū Tegh Bahādur returned to Mākhawāl and devoted himself to organizational and missionary work. His activities, including collection of voluntary contribution from the Sikhs, appear to have created suspicions in Mughal official quarters.<sup>43</sup> Cunningham says, "His reverence for the sword of his father, and his repeated injunctions that his disciples should obey the bearer of his arrows, show more of the kingly than of the priestly spirit." The Sikh Gurūs, he adds, had by that time "come to talk of themselves, and to be regarded by their followers," as *Sachā Pādshāhs* (true kings), "meaning, perhaps, that they governed by just influence and not by the force of arms, so that they guided men to salvation, while others controlled their worldly actions." But the "mystic application" of the term "seems to have preyed upon and perplexed the minds of the Mughal princes" and created the impression that Gurū Tegh Bahādur "aspired to sovereign power."

According to Ghulām Husain, the author of the *Siyār-ul-Mutākhkharīn*, Gurū Tegh Bahādur was taken prisoner on account of his predatory proceedings and executed as a rebel against the Mughal Government. "This man," says he, "finding himself at the head of so many thousands of people, became aspiring : and he united his concerns with one Hafyz-

aadeem,\* a Mohomedan *fakīr*... These two men no sooner saw themselves followed by multitudes, implicitly addicted to their chiefs' will, than forsaking every honest calling, they fell to subsisting by plunder and rapine, laying waste the whole province of Punjāb."<sup>44</sup> This translation of the relevant passage has been condemned as wrong and the following amended version has been proposed : "Tegh Bahādur gathering many disciples became powerful and thousands of people accompanied him. A contemporary saint, Hāfiz Ādam belonging to the order of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindī, had gathered about him a multitude of followers. Both of these took to the practice of levying forcible exactions from Hindūs as Hāfiz did from the Muslims. It would not be strange if with the increase of their influence they created trouble."<sup>45</sup> Both these versions imply some contact between the Sikh Gurū and the Muslim Faqīr, their influence over "thousands of people" and "a multitude of followers," and levy of "forcible exactions." From the point of view of the Mughal government they were trouble-makers.

The *Siyār-ul-Mutākhkharīn* was written in 1783<sup>46</sup>—more than a century after Gurū Tegh Bahādur's death—by a Muslim historian who lived far away from the Punjāb. But he lived for many years at Patnā, a place closely connected with the Gurū's life and one of the most important Sikh centres in eastern India. Moreover, Ghulām Husain's account is supported by a Persian work, *Hakikat-i-Bina wā Uurj-i-Firkāh-i-Sikhān*,<sup>47</sup> written in or about 1783 by Timūr Shāh Abdālī who knew the Punjāb and the Sikhs quite well. It says : "When the news of many people assembling [ around Tegh Bahādur ] reached the holy ears [ of the Emperor ], orders were issued to the effect : 'If, as previously, like the poor Nānakpanthī *faqīrs*, you live peacefully in a corner, no harm will befall you. On the contrary, arms, suitable for your maintenance in the style of *faqīrs*, would be given to you from the State treasury, just as in the case of other prayer-offering groups... But the horses and arms, and the equipment of your retinue that you have gathered in your places of worship, must be removed.' Accordingly, the Faujdār of Sirhind intimated this order [ to Gurū Tegh Bahādur ]. Before the proud and virile disciples who had assembled there Tegh Bahādur said defiantly, 'We are *faqīrs* ; what God has given us, why

\* This is anachronistic. Hāfiz Ādam died in Medīnā in A.D. 1643—twenty-one years before Gurū Tegh Bahādur succeeded to Gurūship. For a more elaborate discussion of this point, see Dr G. S. Ānand's unpublished doctoral thesis on Gurū Tegh Bahādur. —Editors

should we return ? We are living in our own shelters ; why should you harm us ?' On this point arose a great contention, which ended in war and Tegh Bahādur was driven out of that place by force. Tegh Bahādur took up his residence in the jungly country between Shāhjahānābād and Lāhore and passed his days in anxiety."

In the absence of any reference to Gurū Tegh Bahādur in the contemporary Persian histories, we may take the statements of Ghulām Husain and Timūr Shāh Abdālī as an indication that Muslim tradition was unanimous in representing the Gurū in the light more of a military adventurer than of a spiritual leader. This tradition reached even far-off Assam, and the *Pādshāh Buranjī* tells us that "he defied the authority of the *Pādshāh* and roamed about plundering and destroying the country attended by thirty thousand Nānak-panthī sepoys."<sup>48</sup> Both Cunningham and Trumpp accepted this tradition as historically correct. The former writes, "Tegh Bahādur followed the example of his father with unequal footsteps, and... choosing for his haunts the wastes between Hānsee and the Sutlej, he subsisted himself and his disciples by plunder, in a way, indeed, that rendered him not unpopular with the peasantry." He refers to his "league" with a "Mahometan zealot, named Ādum Hāfiz," levy of contributions by them, and their offer of "a ready asylum to all fugitives." A march of imperial troops against them followed ; they were "defeated and made prisoners," and while "the Mahometan saint" was banished the Sikh Gurū was put to death. Writing in the same strain, Trumpp observes, "The Gurū appears by no means as a humble spiritual instructor, but riding at the front of well-armed disciples, who, if not willingly provided, levied contributions on the *zamīndārs* and inhabitants of the villages through which they passed, and made predatory incursions on the Muhammadan population. The Gurū had not only a strong band of Sikhs with him, but he engaged also some rural clans to enter his service, promising them that he would pay them handsomely and put them in the way of obtaining booty." Relying primarily on some *Sākhīs* of very doubtful authenticity he concludes that "the Muhammadan reports, which ascribe his capture and execution to political reasons, deserve... full credit."<sup>49</sup>

The Muslim tradition, which is entirely unsupported by Sikh sources, is definitely wrong in material particulars. According to Ghulām Husain, Gurū Tegh Bahādur was confined at Gwālior where, under imperial order, his body was "cut ... into four quarters" and hung at the four gates of the fortress. As a matter of fact, he was executed in Delhī

where the Sisganj Gurdwārā commemorates the tragic event. Timūr Shāh Abdālī goes to the other extreme ; he makes the Gurū die peacefully, not at the hand of the executioner. Again, Ghulām Husain does not explain why the Gurū should have formed a "league with a Mahometan zealot." If this "Mahometan zealot" was really associated with the order of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindī, his anti-government activities require an explanation in view of the fact that the contemporary chief of that order, Shaikh Saif-ud-dīn Sirhindī, was honoured by Aurangzeb.<sup>50</sup> No details are available about the Mughal government's treatment of this "zealot" apart from Cunningham's cryptic reference to his banishment. What did banishment mean, and why was this punishment considered enough for a disturber of the peace? How the Gurū collected and organized "thirty thousand Nānakpanthī sepoys," as stated in the *Pādshāh Buranjī*, is another mystery. Moreover, the *Buranjī* account is chronologically confused : "The Pādshāh ordered the Gurū to be executed, who for fear of his life sought the protection of Rām Singh, who became surety for the leader. But the aforesaid Nānakpanthī Gurū also made his escape." As we know, Rām Singh returned to Delhī from Assam after the Gurū's execution, and, of course, the Gurū did not make his escape. Timūr Shāh Abdālī asks us to believe that Aurangzeb, the orthodox Sunnī, actually offered to provide "alms, suitable for your maintenance in the style of Faqīrs ... from the state treasury, just as in the case of other prayer-offering group," if the Gurū "lived peacefully in a corner." The Mughal state did not provide alms for the maintenance of non-Muslim *faqīrs*.

These discrepancies are serious enough to discredit the Muslim tradition which was recorded in its present form a century after the execution of Gurū Tegh Bahādur. Turning to Sikh evidence one notices several points which throw light on this tragic episode.

If imperial troops really marched against the Gurū (as Ghulām Husain tells us), it is not a little surprising that the matter should have been entirely ignored or suppressed by Sikh writers. They give details of Gurū Hargobind's battles with the Mughal forces; why should they have maintained complete silence over Gurū Tegh Bahādur's military confrontation with the Mughal government if any such confrontation occurred at all? Gurū Gobind Singh's struggle against the Mughal government figures prominently in the Sikh records ; but these have nothing to tell us about his father's military adventures, presumably because he had no such adventures at all. The Tenth Gurū bowed with love and devotion

to the Holy Sword,<sup>51</sup> but made no reference at all to his father's use of the "Holy Sword" while speaking of him in his autobiography.

This negative aspect of Sikh evidence derives considerable support from such positive evidence as we have in respect of Gurū Tegh Bahādur's personal character. He had received training in arms in his early years and fought bravely at the battle of Kartārpur in the time of his father. But after his father's death in 1644 he spent twenty years at Bakālā in solitude and contemplation, "meditation on the Incomprehensible" and "practising the highest Yoga."<sup>52</sup> When circumstances led to his installation as Gurū, he showed an unusual spirit of forbearance to his intriguing kinsmen and the greedy *masands*. During his tour in the east he engaged himself in peaceful organizational and missionary work; there is really no evidence that he took part in the military operations of the Mughal forces in Assam. His youthful zeal for war appears to have subsided completely in his later years: his writings "unmistakably testify to the saintliness of his character."<sup>53</sup> As many as 59 hymns and 56 *shlokas* composed by him were incorporated in the *Ādi Granth* by Gurū Gobind Singh.<sup>54</sup> Even Trumpp says that his hymns "bear the stamp of a rather melancholy and world-renouncing character."<sup>55</sup> It is probable that his long years of meditation at Bakālā—when his eyes were turned inward—put a new stamp upon his character. There was at that time no possibility of the burden of leadership falling upon him, and free from the responsibilities and anxieties associated with an active secular role, he concentrated his thought on the "Incomprehensible." He responded to the call of duty when it came—quite unexpectedly—after the premature death of Gurū Har Krishan, but he interpreted his new duties in the light of his spiritual development during the preceding twenty years. This explains his "world-renouncing character" during the last two decades of his life. Macauliffe is quite correct in saying that the statements of Ghulām Husain "are utterly incompatible with the whole tenor of Gurū Tegh Bahādur's life and writings, and cannot be accepted as even an approach to history."<sup>56</sup>

As the *Siyār* and the *Hakikat* incorporate virtually the same tradition, it would perhaps be wrong to dismiss it entirely as a later invention. Perhaps it reflected a suspicion that Gurū Tegh Bahādur's tour in the Mālhwā region after his return from the east,<sup>57</sup> during which he attracted a multitude of people and collected voluntary contributions, was politically motivated. Cunningham's comment on the term *Sachā Pādshāh*, quoted above, as also his reference to Browne's statement, should be

noted in this connection. Browne, in his *India Tracts*, attributed Aurangzeb's resolution to put Tegh Bahādur to death to his assumption of the character of a "true king," and to the use of the title of "Bahādur," expressive of valour, birth and dignity.<sup>58</sup> Again, in the *Hakikat* there is a reference to "many people assembling" around him, and he is said to have gathered horses, arms and equipment in his "places of worship." The Mughal administration had little or no anxiety about the Sikhs during the Gurū's absence from the Punjāb ; but after his return from the east they ceased to be leaderless and there was a revival of their organizational activities under the personal leadership of the Gurū. Thus a new situation developed after a lull of about six years, and if Timūr Shāh Abdālī is to be believed, "the news... reached the holy ears."

But Aurangzeb did not strike till Gurū Tegh Bahādur challenged his policy of forcible conversion which was a direct threat to the religious freedom of all non-Muslims in the empire. "The experiment of conversion," says Macauliffe, "was first tried in Kashmīr. There were two reasons for this. In the first place the Kashmīrī Pandits were supposed to be educated, and it was thought that, if they were converted, the inhabitants of Hindustān would readily follow their example ; secondly, Peshāwar and Kābul, Muhammadan countries, were near, and if the Kashmīrīs offered any resistance to their conversion, the Muhammadans might declare a religious war and overpower and destroy them. It was also believed by the Emperor—without foundation as it turned out—that the Kashmīrī Brāhmins might be tempted by promises of money and government appointments, because the beggary and meanness of the inhabitants of that country is proverbial."<sup>59</sup> The Emperor's chosen instrument was his viceroy in Kashmīr, Sher Afghān Khān, who "set about converting the Kashmīrīs by the sword and massacred those who persevered in their adherence to the faith of their forefathers." The Kashmīrī Pandits asked for, and received, six months' time to consider whether they should embrace Islām or die for their religion. When this period of grace was approaching its end the Pandits were supernaturally informed that no one but Gurū Tegh Bahādur would be able to protect their honour and their faith.<sup>60</sup> They came to the Gurū at Ānandpur and "implored him to preserve the honour of their faith in whatever way he deemed most expedient." The Gurū advised them to make the following representation to the Emperor : "First make him [ the Gurū ] a Mussalmān and then all the people, including ourselves, will of

our own accord adopt the faith." They sent a petition to that effect to the Emperor through the governor of Lāhore. The Emperor then ordered the Gurū to be summoned to his presence.<sup>61</sup>

There is no evidence to dispute the Gurū's connection with the Kashmīr movement against forcible conversion. On the other hand, we have positive confirmation of it in Gurū Gobind Singh's well-known statement in the *Bachitra Nātak*. There the Ninth Gurū is described as the protector of the "frontal marks" ( *tilak* ) and "sacrificial threads" ( *janjū* ) of the Hindūs, and it is stated that he suffered martyrdom for the sake of religion ( *dharma* ).<sup>62</sup> As there is no evidence of any direct assault at this time on Sikh *dharma*, the logical presumption is that it was for the sake of Hindū *dharma* ( which was in imminent danger of being liquidated in Kashmīr ) that Gurū Tegh Bahādur suffered martyrdom. This presumption is strengthened by the use of the epithet *Hind dī chādar* ( canopy of India ) in respect of Gurū Tegh Bahādur in the eighteenth century.<sup>63</sup>

Why did the Kashmīrī Pandits approach the Gurū in their distress ? Leaving aside the story of supernatural directive which is beyond historical scrutiny, the most probable explanation appears to be Gurū Tegh Bahādur's reputation for saintliness. His tour of the Mālwā region after his return from Patnā probably created a deep impression on the people who had been affected by the official policy of religious intolerance. It is possible that during these years he preached the message : "Fear no one nor strike fear in any one."<sup>64</sup> The Kashmīrī Pandits needed advice and guidance ; they would not have approached the Gurū if he had been known as the leader of a predatory band ; they were not prepared for a military confrontation with the Mughal government, and they certainly knew that association with a man guilty of lawless activities would put them in further jeopardy. Apparently they were not familiar with the image of the Gurū as a warrior "riding at the front of well-armed disciples, who, if not willingly provided, levied contributions on the *zamīndārs* and the inhabitants of the villages through which they passed, and made predatory incursions on the Muhammadan population."<sup>65</sup> Indeed, this image involves several contradictions. If the Gurū's "well-armed disciples" really "levied contributions on the *zamīndārs*," how are we to explain Sohan Lāl's statement that refractory *zamīndārs* flocked to his camp ? Again, if those "disciples" levied contributions on the villagers, why does Cunningham say that "he subsisted himself and his disciples by plunder in a way indeed that rendered him not unpopular



with the peasantry?" He was a friend of oppressive *zamīndārs* and oppressed peasants at the same time. And, finally, if he "united his concerns" with Hāfiz Ādam, how could he make "predatory incursions on the Muhammadan population?"

Another crucial question is that of the Emperor's personal part in the events leading to the Gurū's execution. In Kashmīr the forcible conversion of the Brāhmins was a new policy adopted by a governor who took charge in 1671; his predecessors in the early years of Aurangzeb's reign were not persecutors. This change seems to have been linked with the Emperor's general order, dated April 9, 1669, "to demolish all the schools and temples of the infidels and to put down their religious teaching and practices." In 1671 another order was issued that all collectors of the crown lands must be Muslims, and all Hindū *peshkārs* (head clerks) and *dīwāniān* were to be dismissed and replaced by Muslims.<sup>67</sup> Apparently Kashmīr was chosen for a large-scale enforcement of this anti-Hindū policy, and Macauliffe's explanation — already quoted — provides a not unlikely clue.

The Afrīdī and Khatak risings of 1672 assumed serious proportions, and with a view to dealing with the situation personally the Emperor went to Hasan Abdāl (between Rāwalpindī and Peshāwar) in June 1674. "By the end of the year 1675 the situation had sufficiently improved to enable the Emperor to leave Hasan Abdāl and return to Delhī."<sup>68</sup> It was during his residence at Hasan Abdāl that the crisis developed in Kashmīr and the Pandits came to Gurū Tegh Bahādur at Ānandpur. Their petition to the Emperor, drafted according to the Gurū's instructions, was sent to the governor of Lāhore for transmission to Hasan Abdāl. The Gurū was summoned to the capital, obviously at the personal direction of the Emperor.

Why was the Gurū directed to go to the capital? If the Emperor wanted to interrogate him in response to the Kashmīrī Pandits' prayer, or to punish him straightway for obstructing the policy of forcible conversion in Kashmīr, he should have been summoned to Hasan Abdāl. If he did not consider the matter important enough to deal with it personally, he might have left it to the governor of Lāhore, with or without specific instructions as to the action to be taken. The summons to Delhī might be explained, it seems, only by two assumptions: Aurangzeb wanted to meet the Gurū, and he thought that the meeting could best be held in Delhī because he had already left, or was soon leaving, Hasan Abdāl for the capital. It is even possible that the issue of summons

took place after his arrival at Āgrā, one of the two capitals.<sup>69</sup>

Was Aurangzeb present in Delhī at the time of the Gurū's execution ( November 11, 1675 ) ? If we rely upon the *Māsir-i-Ālamgīrī* we must give a negative answer, but the authenticity of the chronology given in this standard work is not in all cases beyond question so far as the period after the tenth year of Aurangzeb's reign is concerned.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, it is hardly possible to ignore the unanimous Sikh tradition that the Emperor played a personal role in the tragedy. Apart from later chronicles giving details, there are two very significant statements in Gurū Gobind Singh's *Bachitra Nātak* :

He refused to perform miracles,  
A cheap way of fooling people ;  
True prophets of God are ashamed  
Of displaying their occult powers.<sup>71</sup>

Gurū Tegh Bahādur broke his earthly vase  
On the head of Aurangzeb.<sup>72</sup>

The point that Gurū Tegh Bahādur was asked to show a miracle (which is specifically mentioned by Gurū Gobind Singh) is of crucial importance. This demand was characteristic of Aurangzeb's policy. He had asked Rām Rāi to show a miracle, but Jahāngīr had not tried to put Gurū Arjun to such a test. The fact that the issue of miracles was raised is practically conclusive evidence of Aurangzeb's presence in Delhī and his personal intervention in the Gurū's case. Incidentally, this is additional evidence against the view that the Gurū was punished for predatory activities; disturbers of the peace were not allowed to purchase freedom by display of occult power. Evidently he was treated as a recalcitrant in the sphere of religion and was given a chance to save his life by display of supernatural power or acceptance of Islām. But he refused to exercise either of these two options : "He gave his head but swerved not from his determination."<sup>73</sup>

One further question requires clarification : Did the Gurū respond voluntarily to the imperial summons and surrender himself in Delhī ( as Bhāi Manī Singh<sup>74</sup> says ), or did he try to escape but had to submit to arrest ? Macauliffe's narrative<sup>75</sup> indicates that the Gurū left Ānandpur for Delhī early in June and reached Āgrā where he was arrested on the report of a shepherd boy whom he had given a precious ring and a valuable *shāwl* for bringing him two rupees worth of sweets. It is an extremely curious story. Why did the Gurū go to Āgrā if he had really

started for Delhi? If he wanted to escape it would have been far wiser to proceed in some other direction—to the hills, for instance—instead of entering the lion's den. And if he sought concealment, why did he give the shepherd boy such precious things as would create suspicion? According to Macauliffe, his faithful associate, Dīwān Matī Dās, asked why cash money and a handkerchief had not been given, and the Gurū "replied that what he had done had been done by God's will." Was he deliberately creating a situation in which the attention of the local officials would be drawn to him? In that case what was his real purpose?

Although the general Sikh tradition is that the Gurū was arrested near Āgrā, there are two other versions regarding the place of arrest. According to Kesar Singh Chibber's *Bansāvalīnāmā*, the arrest took place at Malakpur near Rupar. This takes Āgrā out of the picture and indicates that the Gurū was proceeding towards Delhi. Another story is that the arrest was made by the *Faujdar* of Sirhind who sent the Gurū to Delhi, after keeping him in prison for two or three months, when the Emperor returned to the capital from Hasan Abdāl.<sup>76</sup> This presupposes that the order for arrest was issued by the Emperor from Hasan Abdāl and was circulated to imperial officials in the Punjāb.

The mystery behind these conflicting stories will persist until the discovery of fresh evidence. But three points appear to be more or less certain. First, the Gurū was arrested by Mughal officials. Secondly, the Emperor was directly responsible for the arrest as also for the execution which followed. Thirdly, the Gurū made no attempt to escape the consequences of his voluntary commitment to the Kashmiri Pandits. He was mentally prepared for sacrificing himself in defence of religious freedom, although the protection of *tilak* and *janjū* was no part of the Sikh creed. He raised himself far above sectarian considerations and upheld a cause.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Rose, *Glossary of Punjāb Tribes and Castes*, vol. I, p. 685. See also Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, vol. IV, pp. 276-77.
2. *Sūraj Prakāsh*, IX. 2; Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 277-79.
3. J. N. Sarkār, *History of Aurangzeb*, vol. III (ed. 1928), pp. 311-12.

4. *Sūraj Prakāsh*, IX. 22, 23 ; Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 301-3. This narrative is followed by Tejā Singh and Gandā Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, p. 48.
5. *History of Aurangzeb*, vol. III, p. 311.
6. *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārīkh*, ed. Zāfar Hasan, p. 513.
7. Indubbhūsan Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khālsā*, vol. II, p. 51.
8. *Ādi Granth*, Introduction, p. lxxxv.
9. *Later Mughals*, vol. I, p. 77.
10. *Transformation of Sikhism*, p. 115.
11. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, p. 304.
12. *History of Aurangzeb*, vol. III, pp. 265, 267, 281-84. See also Srī Rām Sharmā, *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*, p. 130.
13. Sarkār, *History of Aurangzeb*, vol. III, p. 312.
14. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, p. 304.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 305-6.
16. *Āsā-dī-Vār*, 2 : 6 Tr. ; Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādūr*, p. 102.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 309-10.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 310-13.
20. *Dabistān*, vol. II, p. 271.
21. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 305, 310, 315.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 312, 313, 316.
23. The *Mahimā Prakāsh* gives a pro-Rām Rāi version. See Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādūr*, pp. 115-16.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 108.
25. Indubbhūsan Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khālsā*, vol. II, p. 53.
26. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 317-18.
27. According to Gyān Singh ( *Tawārīkh Gurū Khālsā*, p. 261 ), the Rājā sent Dīwān Paras Rām to Gurū Har Krishan requesting him to come to Delhī. Trilochan Singh ( *Gurū Tegh Bahādūr*, p. 112 ) says that the Gurū, on his arrival in Delhī, was lodged in the Rājā's house at Rāisīnā.
28. *Travels*, p. 260.
29. *Sketch of the Sikhs*, p. 9.
30. *Dabistān*, vol. II, p. 272.
31. Rām Rāi was given a *jāgīr* of seven villages around which developed the town of Dehrā Dūn ( in Uttar Pradesh ). See *Dehrā Dūn Gazetteer*, p. 72.
32. Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādūr*, p. 109.
33. *Maasir-i-Ālamgīrī* ( Eng. trans., pp. 200-1 ) reports Aurangzeb quoting a difficult verse of Gurū Nānak from the *Ādi Granth*. ( S. K. Chatterjī in *Indian Linguistics*, XXV, 1964 : cited by Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādūr*, p. 109 ). Aurangzeb was proficient in theology ; he might have collected the verse from Rām Rāi or some other Sikh of Delhī. The recitation of a verse of Gurū Nānak does not necessarily mean that he was "favourably inclined toward the Sikh movement."
34. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 338-39.
35. Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādūr*, pp. 178, 192-93.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 192.

37. *Travels*, p. 260.
38. *Sketch of the Sikhs*, p. 39.
39. Indubhūsan Banerjee ( *Evolution of the Khālsā*, vol. II, p. 65 ) speaks of Rām Rāi's "machinations at the imperial court," but in Macauliffe's ( *op. cit.*, pp. 334-38 ) Dhīr Mal is the villain of the piece and there is only one reference to Rām Rāi whom Dhīr Mal is said to have "instigated to complain again to the emperor regarding his supersession."
40. *Dehrā Dūn Gazetteer*, p. 73.
41. *History of Aurangzeb*, vol. III, p. 354. This statement is not based on any Persian or Sikh source.
42. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 354-60.
43. Gandā Singh and Tejā Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, p. 53 ; Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādur*, p. 286.
44. Trans. Raymond and Briggs, vol. I, p. 85.
45. Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādur*, p. 286.
46. Elliot and Dowson, *History of India*, vol. VIII, p. 196.
47. Trans. Indubhūsan Banerjee, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, March, 1942.
48. Trans. S. K. Bhuyan, p. 163 ( Quoted in Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādur*, pp. 291-92 ).
49. *Ādi Granth*, Introduction, p. Lxxxix. See also Hughes, *Dictionary of Islām*, p. 593. The *sākhīs* in question ( translated by Attar Singh under the title *The Travels of Gurū Tegh Bahādur and Gurū Gobind Singh* ) relate most probably to the Tenth Gurū ( Indubhūsan Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khālsā*, vol. II, p. 62 ).
50. According to the *Maasir-i-Ālamgīrī*, the Sheikh met the Emperor on June 3, 1669. I owe this reference to Dr Trilochan Singh.
51. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, vol. V, p. 286.
52. This is what Gurū Gobind Singh says in the *Bachitra Nātak* ( Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādur*, p. 92 ). At Bakālā the Bhorā Sāhib represents the Gurū's meditation cell.
53. Indubhūsan Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khālsā*, vol. II, p. 62.
54. Macauliffe. *op. cit.*, vol. IV, pp. 393-421.
55. *Ādi Granth*, Introduction, p. Lxxxviii.
56. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, p. 392.
57. Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādur*, pp. 276-86.
58. It has been suggested that the Ninth Gurū's original name was Tegh Mal, and Tegh Bahādur was the name or title conferred on him by Gurū Hargobind in recognition of his heroism in the battle of Kartārpur. Another view is that Tyāg Mal was an attributed name which he acquired because of his love of solitude and renunciation. Sikh historical tradition is uniformly in favour of "Tegh Bahādur," but "Tegh Mal" occurs in a Mughal official report, dated May 13, 1710. See Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādur*, pp. 13-14.
59. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, p. 369.
60. This revelation, it is said, was made by the god Shiva at the sacred Amarnāth cave. See P. N. Bāmzaī, *A History of Kashmir*, p. 544.
61. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 371-72 ; Bāmzaī, *op. cit.*, p. 555.
62. *Bachitra Nātak : Apnī Kathā* ( text, ed. S. G. P. C. ), p. 58 ; Macauliffe, *op. cit.*,

vol. V, p. 295 ; Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādur*, p. 311.

63. Sewā Singh says in his *Shahīd Bilās : Gurū janjū tike kī lāj rakhāvat* ('the Gurū protected the honour of the sacred thread and the *tilak* or frontal mark'). He also uses for the Gurū the epithet *Hind dī Chādar*. See Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādur*, p. 301.
64. *Shloka* 16 ; Trans. : Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 416 ; Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādur*, p. 184.
65. Trumpp, *Ādi Granth*, Introduction, p. lxxxix.
66. *Umdat-ut-Tawārīkh*, Daftar II, p. 48.
67. J. N. Sarkār, *Short History of Aurangzeb*, pp. 147, 150-51.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 137.
69. Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādur*, p. 300.
70. *Ibid.*, pp. 300, 303-4.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 311.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 321. Macauliffe's translation (*op. cit.*, vol. V, p. 295 ) is as follows :  
 "God's people would be ashamed  
 To perform the tricks of mountebanks and cheats."
73. *Bachitra Nātak* ( Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, p. 295 ).
74. *Sikhān dī Bhagatmāl* ( Quoted in Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādur*, p. 310 ).
75. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, pp. 373-78.
76. Trilochan Singh, *Gurū Tegh Bahādur*, p. 310.

## AN EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY PAINTING FROM NŪRPUR

KARUNA GOSWAMY

For some time now, one has had indications, sometimes vague, sometimes fairly sharp, of there being an active and early school of painting in NŪrpur. There is the evidence of the English traveller William Finch (1608-1611), who describes at some length frescoes in the fort of Lāhore in the time of Jahāngīr, pointing to a portrait of "Rājāw Bossow," "a great minion" of the Emperor, being among those of the courtiers in the Imperial Darbār.<sup>1</sup> This "Bossow," whom we know to be Basu or Basu Dev (1580-1613) of NŪrpur, is not unlikely to have been interested in painting himself and may well have encouraged it in his own state. From the records of the priests at centres of Hindū pilgrimage, it is plain that there was at least one flourishing family of painters at NŪrpur in the seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup> There is, again, mention of frescoes,<sup>3</sup> now unfortunately not extant, at Fatehpur in the NŪrpur territory going back to the period of Rājā Māndhātā (1661-1700). But there has been no pictorial evidence of early painting in NŪrpur available to scholars. And the statement of Karl Khandālavāla<sup>4</sup> that "of painting at NŪrpur, our information is lamentably sketchy," seems neatly to sum up the situation. We have some direct, some not so direct, evidence of painting at NŪrpur in the early part of the eighteenth century. Inscribed portraits are available and sets of paintings have been assigned to NŪrpur from the first half of the eighteenth century onwards.<sup>5</sup> But so far the belief that there was virtually no painting in the hills prior to 1675<sup>6</sup> seems to have received support even from NŪrpur.

This situation, or belief, is likely to be seriously affected now by the discovery of an inscribed portrait of Rājā Jagat Singh of NŪrpur (1619-1646). This painting, which measures 8" × 6" and has a narrow red border, is in the splendid collection of the Chandīgarh Museum,<sup>7</sup> but it has not been noticed by the scholars thus far, owing presumably to the difficulty in reading the Tākri inscription on its back. The inscription has now been read<sup>8</sup> and, running as it does as *Srī Rājā Jagat*

*Singh Pathāniā*, leaves little doubt about the identity of the ruler. It shows the Rājā standing with his hands held in front of him, cupped, not folded, as if to suggest his begging for a boon from a deity placed before him on a high pedestal, in the form of a bronze idol. The Rājā is scantily dressed as befits the occasion : he wears only a *dhotī* and on the upper part of his body a *dupattā* slung across his shoulders, in the approved manner of a Rājput chief at his prayers.<sup>9</sup> The Rājā is resting his weight on his left leg and the right toe is seen resting gently on the ground, the foot being slightly raised. This manner of standing is suggestive, again, like the hand, of a mood of supplication. The Rājā is wearing jewelled earrings and necklaces. He also wears a large turban, unmistakably *Jahāngīrī*, loosely tied and richly coloured. Behind the Rājā is an attendant who is holding a *chaurī* in his left hand; in his right he holds a bowl on a platter. The attendant wears his hair in a topknot and is clad, like the Rājā, only in a *dhotī*. The man is obviously a *pujārī*. But what commands special interest in the painting are the idols which are the object of Jagat Singh's veneration. The hourglass shaped pedestal on the ground has another pedestal, smaller but of the same shape and equally ornate, placed upon it ; on this is a *chhatra*, an umbrella, with a curved stem ending in a beautifully carved peacock at the top. Under the *chhatra* are tiny figures of Vishnu and Lakshmī seated on a *padmāsana*. Lakshmī is in fact seated in the lap of Vishnu who carries his usual attributes : a conch (*shankha*), a disc (*chakra*), a club (*gadā*) and a lotus (*padma*). There is absolutely no mistaking the identity of the idols in this case but below, curled around the lower pedestal, curiously, are two serpents. On the ground lie a conch, a platter, and other instruments of worship. There are more conches resting on platters on the top of the lower pedestal. This whole 'structure' is under a canopy, supported by two poles and bearing a lovely pattern of straight lines converging towards the centre and meeting in a circle. The canopy is partly held up straight by two strings attached to the front corners and fastened to an imaginary wall with the help of nails.

The situation depicted here is full of deep interest and, as shall be seen, of unusual help in the matter of the placing and of the proper identification of the painting. Jagat Singh appears here as a devout Vaishnava : not only is he worshipping the idols of Vishnu and Lakshmī, he is also wearing a prominent Vaishnava *tilak* on his forehead. This is in perfect correspondence with facts. In popular tradition he is believed to be a devout Vaishnava and is said to have got the beautiful black marble



idol of Krishna, now installed as Brijrājswāmī in the fort at Nūrpur, from Chittor in Rājasthān by a stratagem.<sup>10</sup> The bard Gambhīr Rāi in one of his celebrated *kabitts*<sup>11</sup> also describes his hero, Jāgat Singh, as "having strong faith in Vishnu." And none of this seems to run counter to the expectation raised by the fact that Jagat Singh's father, Rājā Basu, was also a strong Vaishnava devotee. It is he who is credited with having raised the now ruined temple in the Nūrpur fort,<sup>12</sup> and having probably been responsible for the introduction of popular Vaishnavism in his kingdom.

The seemingly old feature in the painting comprises the two serpents which appear coiled around the pedestal. The only serpent associated with an idol of Vishnu is the great *Shesha*, but that clearly is not the object of representation here: iconographically, *Shesha* invariably forms the *shayyā* on which Vishnu rests on the primeval waters. In any case, there are two serpents here so that any connection of these with Vishnu is to be ruled out. But fortunately the situation becomes intelligible when we refer to a local tradition. The *kuladevatā* or family deity of the Pathāniā rulers of Nūrpur is the Nāga<sup>13</sup> and it is clear from a great deal of evidence that, in spite of the introduction of Vaishnavism in the state in the early seventeenth century, the allegiance of the rulers to the family deity was not seriously affected. In fact, an interesting compromise seems here to have been struck between the old faith of the region and the 'new' arrival, between Nāga worship and the worship of Vaishnava deities. The Pathāniās continued to honour their family deity by taking their children for their *mundan* or tonsure ceremony to the shrine of the Nāga at Nāgābārī, a few miles from Pathānkot. This is done even to this day.

In the painting, then, the artist has knowingly brought the two elements in the faith of Jagat Singh together: Vishnu and Lakshmī who receive his prayers, and the Nāgas to whom also his reverence is due. This entire circumstance is of deep significance, for a painting like this could perhaps have been executed only by an artist who was not only familiar with the Nūrpur tradition but also, quite clearly, with the different elements of the personal faith of Jagat Singh. It may not be unreasonable then to conclude that the painter was from Nūrpur itself, and was a contemporary.

Pointing also in the same direction is the fact that the portrait of the Rājā is a remarkable study of character and is drawn from life. With brilliance and almost uncanny insight, the painter captures here the

essence of the personality of this extraordinary man.<sup>14</sup> One sees here something of the finesse, the subtlety, the craftiness, the valour, even the iron will, of the man who served under two imperial sovereigns, rebelled against both and rose higher in their esteem after his rebellion, campaigned for them in areas as far distant as Bengāl in the east and Qandahāra in the north-west, subdued Basohlī, murdered the ruler of Chambā, took the lustre of his arms to Mandī and Guler, and led his contingent of Rājput̄s in a campaign against the Uzbeks of which it was said that "the spirit of the Rājput̄s never shone more brilliantly than in this unusual duty." The artist who painted this picture was not producing any stylized portrait: he seems to have personally known something of the fever that resided in this slender but hard frame. There is every evidence in the portrait itself that it is drawn from life. The features are warm and living and the painting seems to vibrate with an intensity that must have been directly and at first hand felt.

There is bound to be doubt about the contemporaneity of the painting. But this is a matter which can be argued. In the style itself, there is nothing that militates against the possibility of this being a work of about A.D. 1630. That it is a clearly early picture would be evident from even the most casual viewing of it. And if there is initial reluctance to place it at a date as early as 1630, the reluctance may be due more to the fact that we are unfamiliar with work done at that date and generally expect Pahārī paintings to be not earlier than the last quarter of the seventeenth century, than to anything else. The colouring of the painting is exceedingly rich: the background is a hot yellow, the border is a deep red, the *dhotī* is mauve, the scarf maroon and light yellow, the turban has stripes of red and gold on a white background. The richness of the pedestals at left and the vivid colouring of the canopy in purple and rust go to add to the richness of effect in the painting. The drawing is again exceedingly firm and bold and can be seen to remarkable advantage even in the tiny figures of Vishnu and Lakshmi which in themselves suggest a very early date for the painting. The work has again a remarkably abstract quality and the painter makes no attempt whatsoever to define the background or to introduce a glimpse of horizon or details of architecture. He instead makes a bold and forthright pattern which shows intense concentration on the essentials of the situation and leaves out everything else much in the manner of authentic work of an early date. There are other features in the painting like the figures cutting into the margin, or the drawing of the feet, which are evidently

archaic. This clearly is not a work which purports to belong to a date to which in fact it does not.

The reliance, in this particular case, on the Tākri inscription for the identification of the Rājā is obviously not misplaced. For we have pointed to circumstances and intrinsic evidence in the painting which support his identification as Jagat Singh Pathāniā. But if any doubt, in the mind of the excessively sceptical, were still left, it is dispelled by a sketch which has only recently come to light. This was seen by V. C. Ohri in the collection of Srī Jarāsandh of Balāwar and shows Jagat Singh again, seated probably in a balcony, holding a *pān* in his hand.<sup>15</sup> The resemblance between the figure in that sketch and in the painting from the Chandīgarh Museum is very close. What is more, there is a faint Tākri inscription on the face of the sketch which reads "Jagat Singh." There is no mention of status or clan-name, but of that there can be now no doubt. Stylistically, the partly coloured drawing raises interesting points, for it has a strongly individualistic floral frame and there is use of beetle-wing cases in the jewellery and the head ornament. But that is a matter which deserves more detailed treatment.

What the painting from the Chandīgarh Museum, together with the sketch from the collection of Srī Jarāsandh, seems sharply to point to is a circumstance which must now perhaps be increasingly recognized. And that is that one has to push back the dates of Pahārī painting earlier than 1675. More and more evidence seems to be coming out in support of this. The series of 'portraits in balconies' to which belong paintings of Prithvī Singh of Chambā,<sup>16</sup> Sārangdhar of Jammū,<sup>17</sup> Murīd Khān *alias* Bhānu Singh of Nūrpur,<sup>18</sup> Sukhdev of Jasrotā,<sup>19</sup> Chhattarsāl of Bandraltā<sup>20</sup> can all be roughly dated between 1640 and 1660.<sup>21</sup> The portraits, again, of Ālam Chand of Kāngrā,<sup>22</sup> of Jagat Singh possibly of Kulū,<sup>23</sup> of the blind Rājā Sītal Dev of Mānkot,<sup>24</sup> all antedate 1675. If one argues that some of these are imaginary portraits produced at a late date, because it was common for portraits of ancestors to be commissioned, there is proof to the contrary in the fact that at least *these* portraits do not look stylized and have strongly individualistic features. There is even more interesting evidence of early painting in an inscribed portrait from Mānkot<sup>25</sup> which shows a priest, *purohit* Gokul, who is described in the inscription as having faithfully served Rājā Sītal Dev for many years. Even if the royal portraits could have been commissioned after the death of the rulers, it is difficult to imagine a portrait of a priest being done later than in his own lifetime.

What the evidence seems to be pushing us towards, then, is the fact that the beginnings of Pahārī painting may well be dated about the year 1625, a date, interestingly, suggested by Ānanda Coomāraswāmy,<sup>26</sup> although he seems to have relied more on intuition than on firm evidence in suggesting this date.

A painting like the one to which this short article is devoted raises many questions. Questions like : Where exactly to place the beginnings of Pahārī art ? Where did such fineness of portraiture at that early date come from ? Can it mean that Nūrpur was a more important centre of painting than Basohli ? To these questions there can, admittedly, be no easy answers. But when the answers come, they will probably be in the form of paintings like this one, apparently stray and unconnected, but in fact full of clues and suggestions.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. William Finch's account in William Foster (ed.), *Early Travels in India*, Delhi, 1968, pp. 163, 179.
2. This was the extensive family of the locally celebrated painter Golū, son of Devidās, names from which go back to the grandfather of Devidās who may well have been the painter of the *Rasamanjarī* set from Basohli. There were other families of artists in Nūrpur, although the information available about them is not equally full. I am grateful to my husband, Professor B. N. Goswāmy, for this information.
3. J. Ph. Vogel, "Ancient monuments of Kāngrā ruined in the earthquake," *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1905-6*, ii, p. 25. Mr Khandālavāla, in his *Pahārī Miniature Painting* (Bombay, 1958), p. 234, mixes up these frescoes with those inside the Nūrpur fort Thākurdwārā. The Nūrpur frescoes belong to the eighteenth century and are ascribed in popular tradition to Golū.
4. *Pahārī Miniature Painting*, p. 234.
5. From the eighteenth century, we have the frescoes by Golū in the Thākurdwārā, many portraits and other pictures from the Wazīr Kartār Singh collection and the set of *Rasamanjarī* paintings now in the possession of Kastūrbhāī Lālbhāī. See, thus, K. C. Āryan, "Nūrpur Frescoes," *Mārg*, vol. xvii, No. 3 ; W. G. Archer and M. S. Randhāwā, "Some Nūrpur Paintings," a symposium, in *Mārg*, vol. viii, No. 3 ; W. G. Archer, *Rājput Miniatures from the collection of Edwin Binney*, 3rd. Portland, 1969, pp. 98-99.
6. *Khandālavāla*, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
7. Accession No. 1339. The painting forms a part of the large collection acquired from Tikkā Inder Vijay Singh of Mānkot.

8. I am grateful for the reading to my husband, Professor B. N. Goswāmy.
9. There are paintings in the Chandīgarh Museum, thus, of Bikram Singh of Guler and of Sansār Chand of Kāngrā performing worship, wearing only a *dhoti*.
10. For a full account of this incident, see Karunā Goswāmy, *Vaishnavism in the Panjāb Hills and Pahārī Painting* (doctoral dissertation in typescript in the Panjāb University Library), 1968, pp. 95-97. It is during a visit to Chittor that Jagat Singh is said to have seen, and developed special fascination for, the idol. He asked for it from the Rānā who however insisted on giving it as a gift in charity to a Brāhman. Jagat Singh, being a Rājput, would not receive charity. But such was his keenness that he took the help of his Brāhman when the actual ceremony of offering the gift was being performed. He himself sat behind a curtain and when the hand had to be extended for receiving the water poured in token of the gift being made, he made the Brāhman stretch his hand out, in place of his own, thus preserving his Rājput pride and at the same time gaining the idol. The story used to be told with much relish by the late bard of NŪrpur, Bānkā Rāi.
11. John Beames (ed.), "The Rhapsodies of Gambhīr Rāi," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengāl*, vol. xlv (1875), part I, No. iii.
12. For a discussion of the date of the temple, see Hīrānanda Shāstrī, "Ruined Temple in the NŪrpur Fort," *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report*, 1904-05.
13. J. Hutchison and J. Ph. Vogel, *History of the Panjāb Hill States*, Lāhore, 1933, vol. I, p. 221.
14. For a full account of Jagat Singh, see Hutchison and Vogel, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 232-55. *The Rhapsodies of Gambhīr Rāi* is a long panegyric on Jagat Singh.
15. I am grateful to Mr V. C. Ohri of the Bhūrī Singh Museum, Chambā, for information on this subject.
16. Reproduced in Khandālavāla, "Portraiture in Rājasthānī and Pahārī Painting," *Times of India Annual*, 1968, fig. 1.
17. Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, Benāras, No. 173.
18. Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, No. 10251.
19. Chandīgarh Museum, No. 1225.
20. Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, No. 171.
21. For a discussion of this group of portraits, see Karunā Goswāmy, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-73.
22. Chandīgarh Museum, No. 2728. Reproduced in Karunā Goswāmy, *op. cit.*, fig. 15.
23. Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, No. 1068. Reproduced in Karunā Goswāmy, *op. cit.*, fig. 21.
24. Reproduced in Khandālavāla, *Pahārī Miniature Painting*, fig. 70.
25. Chandīgarh Museum, No. 1210.
26. *Rājput Painting*, Oxford, 1916, vol. I, p. 1.

## ĀLĀ SINGH : THE FOUNDER OF PATIĀLĀ STATE

INDU BANGA

Ālā Singh's rise to power presents a fascinating phenomenon for the student of Sikh history. From a local *chaudharī* or *zamīndār* in the early 1720's, he became virtually a sovereign ruler by the early 1760's. For about forty years, thus, he remained busy with increasing his resources and power under changing circumstances which were bound to affect his aims and ambition. The study of his career as a statesman is most likely to afford a deep insight into the processes of political change that was taking place in the north-western parts of the Mughal empire during the eighteenth century. Our present purpose is to look a little closely at the process through which Ālā Singh rose to power and pre-eminence in the cis-Sutlej region.<sup>1</sup>

Ālā Singh was born in 1691 at a village called Rāmpurā in the Mughal *sarkār* of Sirhind. His grandfather, Phūl appears to have been a *chaudharī* in the administrative set-up of Aurangzeb. On Phūl's death in 1689 it was not Ālā Singh's father, Rāmā, but his uncle Tilokā who probably became the *chaudharī*. However, Tilokā and Rāmā appear to have remained in close association for a number of years. In 1696, Gurū Gobind Singh addressed a letter to both of them and in 1706 they both supplied provisions to him when he was staying at Talwandī Sābo.<sup>2</sup> More significant than this close association of the two brothers was the fact of their having become the staunch followers of Gurū Gobind Singh. Even after his death they sent a small contingent of armed men to the support of Bandā in 1710.<sup>3</sup> It is also evident that Tilokā and Rāmā were men of some local eminence when Ālā Singh was still in his teens and, furthermore, they had shown bivalent attitude towards the Mughal Government.

Ālā Singh inherited the legacy of his father and uncle and also a little more. He inherited a few villages from his father on his death in 1714.<sup>4</sup> Ālā Singh soon started founding villages on his own initiative and probably with the support of his wife's relations who were not very distant from his own villages.<sup>5</sup> In 1722, Ālā Singh shifted to Barnālā. This marks the beginning of his independent career.<sup>6</sup> It is possible that

Ālā Singh was inspired by his faith in Gurū Gobind Singh and by the example of Bandā, but he does not appear to have formed any intentions of an open revolt against the Mughal Government.

In fact, his chief concern was to increase his resources and his main problem was to do so against the wishes and interest of the local *chaudharīs* and *zamīndārs*.<sup>7</sup> It took him nearly ten years to thwart the hostile designs of his neighbours,<sup>8</sup> and that too with the help of the Khālsā of the central Punjāb. By 1731, he had obliged Rāi Kalhā, the *zamīndār* of Rāikot, to seek the support not only of the *zamīndārs* of Mālerkotlā, Halwārā and Malsiān, but also of the *faujdār* of Jullundur.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, Ālā Singh defeated their combined troops in the battle of Barnālā and attained to a position of undisputed eminence in a region which was rather far from the most important administrative centres of the Mughal Government : Sirhind and Hissār. Barnālā was to serve as his headquarters for nearly twenty years. The remains of Ālā Singh's palace fortress at Barnālā reflect the increase in his power during those twenty years.

Soon after the successful battle of Barnālā, Ālā Singh began seriously to increase his resources by bringing some old villages under his jurisdiction apparently as an *ijārādār* responsible to the Mughal *faujdār* of Sirhind.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, he founded new villages probably on the same basis. The villages, which find mention in this connection, indicate that his jurisdiction was expanding towards the east and south-east of his original villages.<sup>11</sup> It is equally significant to note that Ālā Singh was not very keen to submit regular payments to the Mughal officials even before the invasion of the Mughal empire by Nādir Shāh in 1738-39. After that he was rather reluctant to do so. This brought him into conflict with Alī Muhammad Rohillā,<sup>12</sup> and Ālā Singh was detained in the fortress of Sunām for nearly two years.<sup>13</sup> In 1747, his supporters succeeded in securing his escape. However, Ālā Singh was still keen to temporize with the Mughal Government.

In early 1748, during the battle of Mānūpur between the Mughal armies under the nominal command of the Crown Prince Ahmad and the Afghān army under Ahmad Shāh Abdālī, Ālā Singh gave effective support to the Mughals. He was rewarded with a robe of honour along with a caparisoned horse.<sup>14</sup> Ālā Singh now extended his hold over a considerable number of villages in the *sarkār* of Sirhind. If anything, the recognition of his eminent position as a *zamīndār* by the Mughal Government encouraged him in his activity. In fact, he was now

beginning to extend his control not over single villages but over administrative units of the *sarkārs* of Sirhind and Hissār.<sup>15</sup> He also succeeded in effectively paralyzing the Bhattīs who had been his most formidable rivals in the region in his bid for power.<sup>16</sup> Within seven or eight years of the battle of Mānūpur, Ālā Singh had occupied as many *parganās* in the region lying between the cities of Sirhind and Hissār towards the east and south-east of Barnālā, including the important towns like Sunām, Samānā, Sanaur and Tohānā. Already in 1755 he had defeated the Mughal *faujdār* of Hissār and in 1758 he defeated the Afghān *faujdār* of Sirhind.<sup>17</sup> Obviously, his loyalty was to himself and his primary objective was to increase his territories.

The event which brought recognition to Ālā Singh as an autonomous chief was the battle of Pānīpat which had resulted in the elimination of the Marāthās from the politics of the region and made the Mughal authority completely ineffective. In spite of the fact that Ālā Singh had supplied provisions to the Marāthās before the battle of Pānīpat,<sup>18</sup> Ahmad Shāh Abdālī hastened to recognize him as the ruler of over seven hundred villages, independent of the jurisdiction of the Afghān Governor of Sirhind.<sup>19</sup> Four years later this recognition became more clear when Ahmad Shāh conferred upon Ālā Singh a title, invested him with a *khillat*, kettle drums, and banners, and installed him in the independent chieftainship of Sirhind for an annual subsidy of three and a half lakhs of rupees.<sup>20</sup> Before his death in 1765, Ālā Singh had founded a new capital, Patiālā, at the centre of his possessions which henceforth were to serve as the core dominions of the successors of Ālā Singh.

This brief outline of Ālā Singh's career and achievement is enough to suggest his greatness as a statesman. It is seldom realized, however, that in 1765 Ālā Singh was probably the most powerful of the Sikh chiefs not only of the cis-Sutlej region but also of the Punjāb proper.<sup>21</sup> The absence of any dramatic episodes or decisive events in the career of Ālā Singh is partly responsible for this lack of appreciation for his achievement. Ambition, no doubt, was the dominant trait of his character ; but his ambition was always restrained by cool calculation and caution. No lost battle is on record in his career. And a closer examination of his career reveals that he was as keen to consolidate his growing territories as to effect a piecemeal increase in them.

One of the most effective instruments in the piecemeal extension of Ālā Singh's power was the system of *rākhī* adopted by him. The exact detail of this system is not clear from the available evidence but a few of



its relevant aspects are clear enough. The term *rākhi* has been used by later historians even in connection with the earliest phase of Ālā Singh's career,<sup>22</sup> but this use appears to be anachronistic. What was implied in *rākhi*, in the first place, was "protection" against other individuals or authorities. It could not be offered, therefore, by Ālā Singh before he had come to command sufficient force to meet the counter-claims of his rivals or opponents. *Rākhi* also implied certain concessions to "the protected," including possibly a lenient collection of revenues. In any case, Ālā Singh does not appear to have exacted more than the usual rates of assessment. Ālā Singh's ability to afford effective protection and his leniency would partly explain the popularity of his system amongst a considerable number of the peasantry in the region.<sup>23</sup> At the same time, the system suited Ālā Singh as it required no direct assumption of administrative control. However, the system by its very nature was meant to be transitional<sup>24</sup> and the protected areas were eventually brought under direct administrative control whenever Ālā Singh was in a position to do so.<sup>25</sup>

Nevertheless, Ālā Singh tried to work with the existing administrative institutions which accounts for a large measure of continuity from the reign of Aurangzeb to the rule of Ālā Singh.<sup>26</sup> This may be explained partly by the necessity of circumstances, but at the same time it must be attributed to the practical good sense of Ālā Singh who knew the limitations of his resources and also the advantage of keeping up the existing framework. At any rate, we hear not only of the *qilādārs* appointed by him but also of his *tahsildārs* and *dīwāns*.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, the systems of *batāi*, *kankūt* and cash payment were kept up.<sup>28</sup> The *qānūngo* and the lower functionaries appear to have formed the backbone of Ālā Singh's revenue administration.<sup>29</sup> It must be underlined that the older concessions given to individuals or institutions were confirmed by him irrespective of the recipients' creed.<sup>30</sup> In fact, Ālā Singh's attitude towards his Muslim subjects was generally conciliatory and some individual Muslims were employed in his army and civil administration.<sup>31</sup> Discrimination on the basis of religious differences was no part of Ālā Singh's political creed.

In his "foreign" relations too, Ālā Singh was seldom guided by any religious considerations. This is amply borne out by his attitude towards the other Sikh chiefs of the time as well as the Mughals, the Marāthās and the Afghāns.<sup>32</sup> His political friendship or enmity was dictated by the exigencies of the moment. Unless we grasp this basic trait of

Ālā Singh's political outlook we are likely to misunderstand his attitude towards contemporary leaders of the Khālsā. It must be added, however, that Ālā Singh in his personal life was a devout follower of Gurū Gobind Singh and his first sympathies were with his co-religionists. He appears to have kept his personal beliefs apart from his views on politics. Or, was this catholicity a characteristic trait in the political attitudes of the Sikh rulers ?

## APPENDIX A

### CHRONOLOGY OF ĀLĀ SINGH

- 1691 Born at Rāmpurā.
- 1707 Marries Fateh Kaur of the village Kāleke.
- 1714 Murder of his father, by his own kinsmen.
- 1716 Avenges the death of his father.
- 1722 Leaves Bhadaur and settles at Barnālā ; gets his share of his ancestral villages.
- 1727 Founds Longowāl ; captures Nīmā.
- 1731 Battle of Barnālā : defeats a confederacy of the Munj Rājput̄s, with the help of the Khālsā Dals ; takes *pāhul* ; fights against the Bhattī chiefs with the help of the Khālsā Dals.
- 1745-6 Detained by Alī Muhammad Rohillā, the Mughal *faujdār* of Sirhind.
- 1747-8 Escapes from the fort of Sunām.
- 1748 Helps the Mughal armies at Mānūpur and receives "honours" from Prince Ahmad.
- 1749 Occupies Kākṛā ; constructs a fortress at Bhawānīgarh.
- 1750 Acquires the *parganā* of Tohānā.
- 1752 Receives the submission of the *zamīndārs* of the *parganā* of Sanaur.
- 1753 Founds Patiālā.
- 1754 Helps the Khālsā Dals in the sack of Sirhind; defeats and kills

the Bhattī chiefs of Budhlādā and Bohā with the help of the Khālsā Dals.

- 1755 Battle of Khudal : defeats the combined forces of Muhammad Amīn Khān Bhattī and the Mughal *faujdar* of Hissār.
- 1758 Provides grain and fodder to the Mughal armies under Ālamgīr II and Imādulmulk.
- 1759 Battle of Rāmpurā : defeats a coalition of Muhammad Amīn Khān Bhattī of Bhatnair, Abdus Samad Khān, the Afghān *faujdar* of Sirhind, and the Rohillās ; finally occupies the *parganās* of Jamālpur and Sunām.
- 1761 Helps the Marāthā army with foodgrains and fodder ; Ahmad Shāh Abdālī confirms Ālā Singh in his possessions and recognizes his independence of the Afghān *faujdar* of Sirhind.
- 1762 Helps the Khālsā Dals in the battle of Kup.
- 1764 Joins the Khālsā Dals in the sack of Sirhind ; lays the foundation of a palace fortress at Patiālā.
- 1765 Receives from Ahmad Shāh Abdālī the insignia of royalty and the independent chieftainship of Sirhind for an annual tribute of three and a half lakhs of rupees ; dies at Patiālā, succeeded by his grandson, Amar Singh.

#### APPENDIX B

Political expediency was the guiding principle of Ālā Singh's apparently contradictory "foreign" relations. Aware of the limitations of his own resources, he consistently and readily temporized with all the powers of the day ; he was, in fact, successful in turning their presence in his neighbourhood to his own advantage. His attitude towards the Imperial Government of the Mughals was quite characteristic of his policy. For instance, in 1748 he was honoured by the Mughal Prince at Mānūpur and, in the year following, he wrested the *mahals* of Tohānā and Jamālpur from the Mughal officials, and later on allied himself with the Dal Khālsā against the Mughal *faujdar* of Sirhind. At the same time, we find him helping Mughal armies under Ālamgīr II and

Imādulmulk, against Muhammad Amīn Khān Bhattī, the inveterate enemy of Ālā Singh. When Ahmad Shāh Abdālī virtually destroyed the Mughal authority in the region, Ālā Singh increased his own hold over the countryside without appearing to be a rebel against the Mughal Government. But this brought him into direct conflict with the Afghān *faujdar* of Sirhind whom he defeated in 1759. In 1761, he was helping the Marāthā armies with grain and fodder not because he had a common cause with them but because the Marāthā armies, encamped at an accessible distance from his territories, posed a danger to him.

The battle of Pānīpat eliminated the Mughals and the Marāthās from the political horizon of Ālā Singh. He now had to placate the Afghān Emperor whose *faujdar* of Sirhind could still be a considerable nuisance to him. When pressed by the Afghāns, he quickly negotiated with them, and in March 1761 personally appeared before Ahmad Shāh to present the stipulated sum of four lakhs. Ahmad Shāh not only confirmed Ālā Singh in his possession of over 700 villages, but also issued a *farmān* to Zain Khān at Sirhind to treat Ālā Singh's territories as outside the jurisdiction of the administration of Sirhind. This was a major concession obtained by Ālā Singh, for, already beyond the pale of Mughal administration, he was now beyond the reach of the Afghān governors.

At this stage Ālā Singh adopted a bivalent attitude both towards Ahmad Shāh Abdālī and the Dal Khālsā. He pacified the latter by professing that his submission to Ahmad Shāh Abdālī was only a matter of expediency dictated by a difficult situation. He escorted the women and children of the Dals to Barnālā, but refused to face Ahmad Shāh in the field of battle. Then, characteristically, after being a party to the expulsion of Zain Khān from Sirhind, Ālā Singh obtained from Ahmad Shāh the insignia of royalty and the title of Mahārājā. By accepting the nominal suzerainty of Ahmad Shāh Abdālī, he established his *rāj* on a firm footing. It is extremely doubtful that Ālā Singh ever took his vassalage seriously. Appearances were immaterial so long as he could possess real power in his own hands.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. For some of the most significant events in Ālā Singh's career, see the chronological table (Appendix A) given above.

2. Gandā Singh, *Hukamnāme*, Punjābī University, Patiālā, 1967, pp. 148-49.
3. Rattan Singh Bhangū, *Prāchīn Panth Prakāsh*, Amritsar, 1962, p. 89. The *Hukamnāmās* of Mātā Sāhib Devī and Mātā Sundarī to Ālā Singh and his brothers reveal their association with the family of Gurū Gobind Singh even in the 1720's : Gandā Singh, *Hukamnāme*, pp. 209 and 212-13.
4. Ālā Singh's inheritance consisted of the villages Barnālā, Tapā and Tājo and half of Ākaliā ; see Karam Singh, *Bābā Ālā Singh*, Patiālā, 1918, p. 82.
5. Bībī Fatto, Ālā Singh's wife, belonged to village Kāleke. Her brothers and cousins associated themselves with Ālā Singh from the very beginning of his career. After the founding of Dirbā by Ālā Singh, for instance, the Kālekes became its "fence" and founded their own villages around it. Gurbakhsh Singh Kāleke was the most prominent among them. For detail see Karam Singh, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-8 ; Kirpāl Singh, *Mahārājā Ālā Singh of Patiālā*, Khālsā College, Amritsar, 1954, pp. 34, 77 and 86.
6. After the death of his father, Ālā Singh had been staying with his brother Dunnā Singh in the latter's village Bhadaur. Dissatisfied with his brother's domineering influence, he was on the lookout for an opportunity to leave Bhadaur. On account of the severe famine of 1721, the revenue due on Dunnā Singh could not be realized and he was imprisoned. To save himself from financial liabilities, and at the suggestion of Sant Charan Dās, Ālhā Singh left Bhadaur and shifted to Barnālā in 1722 ; see Karam Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 79 ; Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
7. For instance, Bīr Bhān, the *chaudharī* of the village Sangherā, wanted Ālā Singh to check the *zamīndār* of Mālerkotlā from harassing his village ; cp. Karam Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
8. Sondhe Khān of Nīmā, a relative of Rāi Kalhā, for instance, was one of the powerful neighbours of Ālā Singh whom he regarded as a rival. Ever since Ālā Singh's occupation of Barnālā, he had been carrying on depredations on the *māl* destined for Barnālā. Ālā Singh was in no position yet to confront Sondhe Khān. Sondhe Khān's death around 1730 afforded the opportunity and with the help of his adopted son, Nigāhī Khān, Ālā Singh successfully attached Nīmā and made Sondhe Khān's real sons approach Kalhā, their uncle, for help. See Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.
9. Asad Āli Khān, the *faujdar* of Jullundur at that time, was a friend of Rāi Kalhā. See Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
10. Ālā Singh's position during this period is not clear. He could, at one and the same time, be an *ijārādār*, a *chaudharī*, a *zamīndār* and a proprietor of different villages and holding them in different capacities. But he was not independent of the Government. Even in 1745 we find Āli Muhammad detaining Ālā Singh for non-payment of the arrears of revenue since the invasion of Nādir Shāh.
11. For instance, Chhajli, Bhikhī, and Ubbā. For the location of these villages, see the map given by Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, opposite page 70.
12. Āli Muhammad, a Rohillā *sardār* of considerable power and backing, was, according to Ānand Rām Mukhlis (Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 59) the *faujdar* of Sirhind. But Karam Singh (*op. cit.*, p. 117) mentions him as a "contractor"

- or *ijārādār*. Whatever his position in relation to the Mughal Government, Ālā Singh obviously was responsible to him for the payment of revenues and arrears.
13. The circumstances leading to Ālā Singh's detention in the fort of Sunām are not very clear (for a detailed discussion, see Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-66). It appears that Ālā Singh was detained there as a hostage and his family was made to pay up the arrears as well as the revenues. But there is no reason to suppose that they were rendered destitute (*ibid.*, p. 64). It is very likely that his sons and associates had, in his absence, kept his possessions largely intact. For, after about two years, we find Ālā Singh escaping from the fort of Sunām with the help of a number of people, and immediately after that he was helping the Mughal armies encamped near Mānūpur.
  14. *Tazakirā-i-Ānand Rām*, quoted, Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
  15. For instance, the *parganās* of Sanaur (Chaurāsī), Samānā, Sunām, Tohānā and Jamālpur.
  16. The depredations of the Bhattīs over the area around Sunām were bound to bring them into conflict with Ālā Singh. With the help of the Khālsā Dals, Ālā Singh attacked the Bhattī chiefs, Allāhdād Khān Bohewālā, Ināyat Khān and Vilāyat Khān of Budhlādā and Bahār Khān of Hariāho, and was successful in at least breaking the spell of their power for the time being and founded several villages adjoining Longowāl and Sunām. But the Bhattī chiefs of Budhlādā had not halted their depredations into the territory of Ālā Singh. He again sought the help of the Dal Khālsā and defeated and killed the Bhattī chiefs and captured their possessions. This and the capture of Tohānā and Jamālpur brought him face to face with the most formidable of the Bhattīs, Muhammad Amīr Khān of Bhatnair. The latter joined hands against Ālā Singh, first with the Mughal *faujdar* of Hissār and then with the Afghān *faujdar* of Sirhind. But he was defeated each time. The battle of Rāmpurā which was fought in 1759 proved to be decisive and after this Ālā Singh's territories were safe from the encroachments of the Bhattīs. See Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-54, 79-83, 88-90.
  17. Ālā Singh defeated the *faujdar* of Hissār and Muhammad Amīn Khān Bhattī in the battle of Khudal in 1755. A strong coalition of Afghān *faujdar* of Sirhind, Muhammad Amīn Khān Bhattī and the Rohillās was defeated in the battle of Rāmpurā in 1758.
  18. Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 100. The author bases himself on the evidence of the *Tārīkh-i-Āhmad*, *Khazānā-i-Āmirā*, and the *Tārīkh-i-Bhau-wa-Janko*.
  19. Khalifā Muhammad Husain, *Tārīkh-i-Patiālā*, quoted, Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-5.
  20. Nūr Muhammad, *Jang Nāmāh*, quoted, H. R. Gupta, *A History of the Sikhs*, Simlā, 1952, I, p. 230.
  21. No specific figures of the forces of Ālā Singh and other Sikh chiefs in 1765 are available. But a general idea of Ālā Singh's striking power and the extent of his territories in comparison with those of the Sikh chiefs of the trans-Sutlej region would perhaps corroborate the following, general but very suggestive, statement of Qāzī Nūr Muhammad: "In the country of Sirhind there was a

chief, nay a commander of an army, who was a *zamīndār* in that land and also a ruler, *Hākīm*, a Governor, *Zābit*, and a Commissioner, *Amīn*. Nobody else is so resourceful in the countries of the Punjāb, Lāhore and Sirhind as he is. He has got Muhammadans also in his service. All Hindūs are obedient to him." *Jang Nāmāh*, quoted, Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

22. Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
23. The inhabitants of villages Bhainī, Choorāh, Ghuman, Kuttiwā, Katwān, Dhamtān, Dharodī, Belrakhā, Kharal, Lāwan, Pīpal, Theh, Danodī and Bathumrā, for instance, chose, of their own accord, to be protected by Ālā Singh.
24. The task of Ālā Singh's occupying garrisons (*zhānās*) or "*sarhaddī hākims*," who were stationed in the fortresses constructed in the areas newly occupied or on the borders of those to be occupied was well-suited to the stage of transition. They were (i) to collect *rākhi* or the stipulated share of the revenues from villages ; (ii) to protect and persuade the villages around to accept Ālā Singh's authority and if need be, to make a demonstration of force, but without going to extremes ; and (iii) to establish order in the newly conquered territories which would then be given by Ālā Singh to someone else to administer, and in all probability these *thānedārs* would then be shifted elsewhere. Some of the important *thānedārs* of Ālā Singh were Hirā Singh, Bīkā Singh Sekhon, Gurbaksh Singh Kāleke, Harī Singh Gujjar and Jhandū Singh Dhāi.
25. Ālā Singh's assumption of direct administrative control of a newly acquired territory usually amounted to the shifting of the occupying garrisons elsewhere, appointment of a *qilādār*, a *diwān* and a *tahsildār* and the continuation of the previously existing methods of assessment and collection of revenues. He appears to have allowed the continuance of the customary allowances to the village headmen, *brāhmins*, *sayyids* and *faqirs*. He, moreover, replaced mud fortresses by brick forts ; repaired and extended the old ones ; and constructed new fortresses in the strategically important areas. Some of his important fortresses were those of Bhawānigarh, Barnālā, Mūnak, Sunām, Sharakpurā, Dharsūl and, eventually, Patiālā. See Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, pp. 144 and 184.
26. Cf. Indū Bāngā, "Continuity of Mughal Institution under Sikh Rulers," a paper read at the Aligarh Muslim University in December, 1969.
27. See note 25, above.
28. Kirpāl Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 182 (the text of a petition of 1820, referring to the earlier situation).
29. Karam Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 167. Not many specific references to *qānūngos* or the lower functionaries are there in the available evidence. But there is no mention of any change, either. There is a strong presumption in favour of continuity here, because in the time of Ālā Singh's successors these functionaries were very much there.
30. Ālā Singh does not seem to have interfered with the established rights of property in land (Cf. *Phulkīān States Gazetteer*, Lāhore, XVII, 161). He appears to have been equally particular about upholding the customary rights and concessions enjoyed by Muslims. The continuity of the annual allowances made

- to the *sayyids*, for instance, or the *madad-i-ma'ash* grant to the *shaikhs* of Jamālpur, originally made by Shāh Jahān, are some of the examples which illustrate Ālā Singh's attitude towards his subjects. See Lepel Griffin, *Rājās of the Punjab*, Lāhore, 1870, p. 274 ; Karam Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 171.
31. Some of the Muslims employed by Ālā Singh, for instance, were Nigāhī Khān of Nīmā, Sardār Khān of Mūnak, Rahmān Khān of Budhlādā, Allāh Bakhsh of Kakrā, Muhammad Sāleh Khokhar of the *parganā* of Sanaur, Lakhnā Dugar of Tāpā and Rāi Jaffār Khān of Hadiāyā.
  32. See Appendix B, above.



## THE SIKH MISL

GURBACHAN SINGH NAYYAR

The term "Misl" is the equivalent of "equal" or "alike." Cunningham suggests the derivation of the term from the Arabic word *mustuhut* which would equate it with "armed men and warlike people." It is also held by him that *misl* might mean a file of papers or, indeed, anything placed in ranks.<sup>1</sup> By derivation, the term could be applied to the organization of the Sikhs which, at one stage, maintained files of their territorial claims at the Akāl Takhat. For David Ochterlony, the *misl* meant a tribe or race.<sup>2</sup> Wilson understood it in terms of voluntary association of the Sikhs.<sup>3</sup>

The earliest occurrence of the word *misl* in the Sikh literature can be traced to Gurū Gobind Singh's time. Saināpat, a contemporary and earliest biographer of Gurū Gobind Singh, uses the word *misl* at two places in his *Srī Gur Sobhā* in the sense of a group.<sup>4</sup> The first use of the term *misl* occurs in the account of the battle of Bhangānī. Saināpat writes that the horsemen of Gurū Gobind Singh assembled under their banners at the beat of war-drum. In the battlefield, *morchās* were set up at various places which were allotted to *misls* (groups). The second time, Saināpat uses the word *misl* in reference to the last days of Gurū Gobind Singh at Nānder. He says that the people came there in *misls* (groups).

The word *misl* has also been used by Rattan Singh Bhangū in the sense of a group.<sup>5</sup> He illustrates the point when he mentions the word in relation to *vahīr* and *thannā*. He observes that *misls* taken together comprised a *thannā*. *Thannā* is described as the largest group.<sup>6</sup> Its leader was known as *thannewāl*. Some of the *thannewāls* are mentioned by him. He describes *vahīr* as the smallest group. Ordinarily no leader was sent with a *vahīr*.<sup>7</sup>

From the use of the term *misl* by Saināpat and Rattan Singh Bhangū it is evident that it meant a group, though we are unable to form an estimate about the number of men this group comprised. We may say on the basis of contemporary evidence cited above that the word was used to mean a group. This group possibly consisted of people gathered

together for the purpose of fighting or otherwise.

Just as there is no single connotation of the term which may be generally acceptable, so there is no single description of the origin, nature or working of the *misl* which may satisfy all students of Sikh history. To Wilson the organization of the *misl* seemed strictly democratic, a view shared by Prinsep.<sup>8</sup> Payne thought of the *misl* as some sort of a clannish organization based none the less on strict democratic principles.<sup>9</sup> It is held by others that an essential feature of the *misl* was the supreme power of its *sardār* who was "paramount in peace and war."<sup>10</sup> George Thomas, J. D. Cunningham and Syed Muhammad Latif emphasize the religious character of the men who constituted the *misl*s; they emphasize also the "laws" which governed them. They thus hold it to be theocratic in nature.<sup>11</sup> There are many more who confer upon the *misl* a confederate or a feudal character.<sup>12</sup> Curiously enough, both aristocratic and socialistic elements are discerned in the *misl* by some historians.<sup>13</sup> The widely prevalent confusion concerning the organization of the *misl* is due to the fact that no distinction is made between the earlier and the later phases of the development of the *misl*.

The origin of the *misl* organization may be traced to the practical needs of the Sikhs in a certain political situation. After the death of Bandā Singh Bahādur, there was left a considerable number of Sikhs who, by virtue of their religious discipline, mental training and association, were convinced that defiance of an unjust rule was their duty. They were never willing to submit to the Mughal authority. To begin with, they concentrated on increasing their number and on bringing about unity in their ranks.<sup>14</sup> The increase in numbers necessitated in turn better organization to enhance the power of resistance and to increase the striking power of the Khālsā. Nawāb Kapūr Singh, one of the most respected figures in the post-Bandā Singh Bahādur period, divided the Khālsā into five different groups commanded by old veterans.<sup>15</sup>

The conflict of the Khālsā with the authorities affected the nature of the *misl* organization and helped its transition from a non-territorial group into a territorial power. The attitude of defiance had increased in direct proportion to the increase in the strength of the organization. The Mughal authorities were compelled to take a serious view of this rising wave of disaffection. The policy of placating the Khālsā by *jāgīrs* and the hopes of getting them settled as peaceful subjects gave place to determined attempts at wiping out their political identity.<sup>16</sup> This situation obliged the Khālsā to improve their organization.

The acquisition of territories changed in due course the character of leadership as well as the nature of the organization. The disparity in wealth and geographical location of the chiefs' territories introduced extraneous elements in the choice of a leader.<sup>17</sup> The internal organization of the *misl* now witnessed gradation.<sup>18</sup> The considerable amount of internal mobility which was earlier afforded to the individual members was now strictly limited. The change in allegiance at this stage generally meant the taking away of the land assigned to the member. This discouraged mobility. Socially, too, it was inconvenient for a member to leave his kith and kin and settle down amongst people of a different clan.<sup>19</sup> Members transferring their allegiance from one *sardār* to another were likely to lose several other privileges. The dominant chief was liable to be high-handed with his weaker associates.

Defections from one chief to another were not altogether absent, but were seldom resorted to, probably only when the defector was confident of his military might to face the parent body and his aggressive neighbours. This led at the same time to his alliance with the *sardārs* of other *misl*s. It was, therefore, quite common for the offenders to take refuge with the neighbouring *sardārs*. Even earlier, two or more *misl*s could undertake a joint expedition<sup>20</sup> and the conquered territories could be partitioned amongst them. But as the territorial ambitions of the *sardārs* became more pronounced, the way was prepared for their own liquidation.<sup>21</sup>

The ability to muster arms and the extent of territories determined the worth of a *sardār* in the new situation. The *sardārs* often resorted to convenient matrimonial alliances, as it happened between the Kanhaiyās and Sukarchakkīās.<sup>22</sup> That it provided the ladder for the rise of Ranjīt Singh is a typical example. A firm alliance, for political ends, could also be effected by the ceremonial exchange of turbans at the Akāl Takhat to be followed by a public vow of mutual assistance. Such alliances were not only directed against the enemies of the land of the five rivers; they were sometimes formed against the fellow *sardārs* in the *misl* itself. References to the participation of the *misl*s in mutual warfare confirm the above contention. Also, the *gurmatā*, which had been often held in the earlier phase and at one time had developed almost into a regular institution, was now seldom resorted to. In fact, there are not more than two instances of its general convocation after 1760; it was almost a dead letter when it was discontinued by Ranjīt Singh after 1805.

To conclude, for a clear understanding of the nature of the *misls* it is not useful to fit them in one or another theory of the State. An attempt must be made to understand the stages through which this institution had passed. The study of its nature and development on empirical lines can alone reveal its essential characteristics.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Cunningham, J. D., *History of the Sikhs*, London, 1849, p. 114n.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
3. Wilson, H. H., "Civil and Religious Institutions of the Sikhs" in *The Sikh Religion* (A Symposium), Susil Gupta, Calcuttā, 1958, p. 61.
4. *Sri Gur Sobhā* (A.D. 1711), ed. Gandā Singh, Punjābī University, Patialā, 1967, pp. 9, 124.
5. *Prāchīn Panth Parkāsh* (ed. Bhāi Vir Singh), Khālsā Samāchār, Amritsar, 1962, p. 364.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 365-66.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 363.
8. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 61; Prinsep, H. T., *The Origin of the Sikh Power*, Languages Department, Punjāb, Patialā, 1970 (reprint), p. 23.
9. Payne, C. H., *A Short History of the Sikhs*, London, n.d., pp. 59-60.
10. M'Gregor, W. L., *The History of the Sikhs*, London, 1846, pp. 118-19; Franklin, W., *Military Memoirs of George Thomas*, Calcuttā, 1803, p. 76.
11. Franklin, *op. cit.*, p. 76; Syed Muhammad Latif, *History of the Punjāb*, Calcuttā, 1891, p. 290; and Cunningham, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-14.
12. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-14.
13. James Browne; see Gandā Singh, *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, p. 14.
14. Rattan Singh Bhangū, *Prāchīn Panth Parkāsh*, Amritsar, 1962, pp. 45-47.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 214-16.
16. The cases of Tārā Singh Vān, Bhāi Manī Singh, and Bhāi Tārū Singh may be mentioned in this connection.
17. Khushwant Singh, *The Sikhs*, London, 1953, pp. 52-55.
18. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-14.
19. Payne, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-66.
20. Prinsep, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-36.
21. *Loc. cit.*
22. Batāliā, Ahmad Shāh, "Zikr-i-gurūān wā Ibtidā-i-Sikhān wā Mazhab-i-Eshān," appendix in *Umdat-ut-Tawārīkh*, daftar 1, Lāhore, 1885, p. 25.

THE PREM SUMĀRAG : A THEORY OF SIKH  
SOCIAL ORDER

J. S. GREWAL

With the growing awareness among the historians of the possibilities and limitations of their task, many of the problems of historiography have turned out to be the problems of methodology, involving not only the use of fresh evidence but also the proper interpretation of both new and old evidence. The use of literature as a form of evidence on the past is known to almost every working historian, but to determine the significance of literary evidence for past modes of life is neither a simple nor an easy task. It is on this clear assumption that a brief analysis of the *Prem Sumārag* is attempted. The attempt is worth making if only because of the existence of a considerable bulk of literature of a similar nature which has been left to posterity by the early eighteenth-century followers of Gurū Gobind Singh.<sup>1</sup>

The *Prem Sumārag*, though well known now to the students of Punjābī literature, has not been given much attention by the students of Sikh history. In the late nineteenth century, the Nāmdhārī Gurū, Rām Singh, had recommended the work to his followers presumably as a religious text.<sup>2</sup> Bhāi Kāhn Singh of Nābhā had published extracts from his manuscript copy of the *Prem Sumārag* in an anthology of Sikh codes of conduct.<sup>3</sup> In the present century, interest in the work has passed on to the students of Punjābī literature. Dr Mohan Singh, flushed with his rediscovery of this interesting piece of Punjābī prose, has underlined its importance by characterizing the period between the death of Gurū Gobind Singh and the birth of Ranjit Singh as "the age of *Prem Sumārag*."<sup>4</sup> The work has been published by the Sikh History Society, with an elaborate introduction by Bhāi Randhīr Singh.<sup>5</sup> Among the historians of Sikhism, however, Professor Tejā Singh is perhaps the only one to have thought of the *Prem Sumārag* as a source of Sikh history.<sup>6</sup>

So far, the *Prem Sumārag* has been approached in three ways. It has been considered a source of religious, social or political inspiration in the present. Bhāi Randhīr Singh, for instance, equating it with "the

Khālsā way of life," sees its relevance for political aspiration and policies in post-Independence India.<sup>7</sup> It has also been regarded as a motive force of change in the past. Dr Mohan Singh, for example, sees the early nineteenth-century Sikh history largely as a historical corollary of the author's vision of the future.<sup>8</sup> Professor Tejā Singh, assuming the work to be a direct statement of historical facts, has approached it as an "authority" on contemporary Sikh community.<sup>9</sup>

It may be left to future historians to decide whether or not the *Prem Sumārag* is serving as a source of inspiration for the Sikhs today, but a brief comment on the other two approaches to it is necessary to clear the way to a historical interpretation of the *Prem Sumārag* as a source of evidence on Sikh history.

According to Dr Mohan Singh,<sup>10</sup> the author of the *Prem Sumārag* had foreseen the time when a better, nobler, purer class (Khālsā) will come into power and rule for the good of all. With a deep sense of reality (and here he was greater than Plato), the author had presented "the ideal Sikh State" to be actualized in the early nineteenth century. "We have to note," says Dr Mohan Singh, "that long before a Punjābī king rose in the person of Mahārājā Ranjīt Singh, this artist of vision had imaginatively conceived of a state which would simultaneously take up and solve the linguistic, ethical, cultural, political, military, and financial problems of the people." This view of the *Prem Sumārag* unrealistically exaggerates the role of literature in the development of human destinies and institutions; it is based on anything but empirical evidence; it misconceives both the ideal and the actual, and it over-emphasizes the political aspect of the *Prem Sumārag*. Without ruling out the possibility of its influence in Sikh history, it may safely be stated that the nature of that influence is yet to be determined. All casual connections are to be established and not simply assumed.

Professor Tejā Singh has relied on the *Prem Sumārag* to support his view that Gurū Gobind Singh has vested the Gurūship in the Khālsā.<sup>11</sup> "If anybody wishes to see me," says Gurū Gobind Singh (in the *Prem Sumārag* as quoted by Professor Tejā Singh), "let him go to an assembly of Sikhs, and approach them with faith and reverence; he will surely see me amongst them."<sup>12</sup> There is no justification for attributing this statement to Gurū Gobind Singh himself. It is difficult to establish the authenticity of any one of the statements contained in it. Furthermore, the anonymous author presents the whole work as the address of the Immortal Being (God) to Gurū Gobind Singh before the Khālsā

was created. Taking his standpoint in the past, the author has projected his vision into the future. Unless it is determined, from evidence other than that of the *Prem Sumārag*, how much of it is *post-eventum* prophecy, the relationship of the work to its historical environment remains most tenuous. It cannot thus be used as an ordinary source of Sikh history.

The *Prem Sumārag* may be considered as "a theory" of Sikh social order. With its comprehensive scope, the work is little short of an exposition of a whole social order. The author expresses his views on the purpose and the goal of this social order and he presents the ideal norm to which the private and public life of the members of the society should conform. The work, of course, was not written in a historical vacuum and the author wrote it with a purpose. The *Prem Sumārag* bears witness to the religious psychology of the author and his social and political consciousness as a member of the Sikh community at a certain stage in its history.

For a general analysis, the *Prem Sumārag* may be conveniently divided into three parts.<sup>13</sup> The opening four or five pages serve as a sort of prologue to the main work which sets out in detail what is expected of each member of the Sikh community in the religious, social and political spheres. The last chapter of six pages may be regarded as an epilogue.

The prologue, from a purely literary point of view, is an artistic device to underline the importance of the main work. The comprehensive code of conduct becomes obligatory because of the nature and purpose of the *panth* presented in the prologue. The Khālsā, with a direct Divine sanction behind it, was created to dispel all evil and ignorance and to spread the right religion among the whole of mankind. That end, however, was not near at hand; the people in the *kaliyug* were still to suffer oppression leading to a complete moral anarchy. Only those who would follow the code of the Khālsā will survive into the *satyug* which would be brought to earth by Divine intervention in human affairs. All this was foretold by God Himself to Gurū Gobind Singh.

The artistic device was made possible by the experience of the Sikh community in the immediate past. Before the Khālsā was brought into existence, Gurū Gobind Singh had publicized his mission through the *Bachitra Nātak* (a work which was certainly known to the author of the *Prem Sumārag*). The Immortal Being had told Gurū Gobind Singh :

I have cherished thee as My son,  
And created thee to extend My religion.

Go and spread My religion there,  
And restrain the world from senseless acts.<sup>14</sup>

The opening paragraph of the *Prem Sumārag* is a paraphrase of this claim to Divine authority for the mission of Gurū Gobind Singh. An important purpose of his mission was to put an end to oppression :

I assumed birth for the purpose  
Of spreading the faith, serving the saints,  
And extirpating all tyrants.<sup>15</sup>

Gurū Gobind Singh, however, had not succeeded in extirpating the tyrants and Bandā Singh's attempt at establishing a sovereign state in the name of the Khālsā had failed. As Bhāi Manī Singh put it,<sup>16</sup> the power of the Khālsā had snapped and the Singhs had taken refuge in mountains and deserts ; the *mlechhas* had overwhelmed the country, and in the town no grown-up female was safe ; they were cutting (the Singhs) into pieces ; the apostates had come to side with them and the Hindālās were serving them as their secret informers. The author of the *Prem Sumārag* makes necessary adjustment to the new situation in the prologue : a period of persecution is forecast and the triumph of the Khālsā is postponed to an indefinite but not very distant future.

The prologue is thus not simply an artistic device but also a reassurance to the Khālsā in their faith to suffer for the sake of right religion, hoping for better days to come. Whosoever will follow the code instituted by Gurū Gobind Singh would not only save himself but become the agent of liberation for his associates in this world ; he would abide eternally in the *Sachkhand* in association with the Sant-Khālsā in the life hereafter. In following the way of life presented in this book, the Khālsā would be obeying the will of God. The prologue provides the author with a standpoint from which he can invoke the authority of Gurū Gobind Singh. With this purpose in mind, he naturally attributed the work to Gurū Gobind Singh rather than to himself.

What is implicit in the prologue is explicitly stated in the epilogue. Here the individual is asked to be pleased with whatever happens to him. The root of all suffering is egocentricism ; the remedy for egocentricity is the realization of God's omnipotence and submission to His will. Therefore, a complete submission to the will of God and indifference to both pain and pleasure formed the essence of "the way of love."

However, this way of *sahaj-yog* was meant only for the few even



among the Khālsā. The main body of the work was meant for the majority who would pursue their worldly affairs in accordance with the injunctions of the *Prem Sumārag*.

This bulk of the work, which was meant for the active Khālsā, covers the social and political as well as the religious aspect of the ideal Sikh community. In his formal division of this largest part of the book, the author presents the religious beliefs and practices to be followed by the Sikhs. He explains in some detail how the *pāhul* should be administered to initiate a person into the Khālsā. He gives the ceremonies to be performed at the birth of a child in a Sikh family, at the marriage of a person and at a person's death. The author deals with the occupations to be pursued by the Khālsā and what they should do with their property. He gives an exposition of the ideal Sikh government and administration. In this formal treatment of these topics, there is a good deal of repetition and some contradiction. Also, the scope of discussion in these chapters is often wider than what might be suggested by their headings.

The author of the *Prem Sumārag* was not writing a formal treatise on Sikh social order. But it is possible to form an idea of his conception of an ideal Sikh society by asking some relevant questions which can then be answered from the *Prem Sumārag*.<sup>17</sup> These questions are :

1. What were the personal religious beliefs of the members of an ideal Sikh community ?
2. What were their moral duties as individual persons ?
3. What were their obligations towards the other members of the community ?
4. What was their attitude towards women and towards caste ?
5. What was their attitude towards the members of communities different from their own ?
6. What was an ideal Sikh state ?
7. What kind of social structure can one visualize in the author's presentation of an ideal Sikh society ?

The author inculcates belief in the Immortal Being as the only omnipotent and omnipresent God. A Khālsā should devote his body, mind and wealth to the Immortal Being, always remembering Him and accepting His will cheerfully. In all humility, he should attribute his good deeds to God's grace and not to himself. He must have no faith in gods and goddesses or in the worship associated with them in temples or homes. He should not care for fasting, pilgrimages, thaumaturgy,

necromancy or astrology. He should believe in no *pīr* or *gurū* other than the ten Sikh Gurūs who embodied one and the same light of Truth inspired by God. Devotion to the Gurūs was little short of submission to God's will. The Khālsā should love the Word or the Gurbānī for "the Word is the Gurū and consciousness is its disciple." The recitation of select portions of the *Gurū Granth* and the writings of Gurū Gobind Singh, four or five times a day, accompanied by personal prayers, was obligatory on the Khālsā. They should take *pāhul*, keep arms and *kesh*, and wear *karā* and *kachh*.

However, the spirit of the Sikh *rahit* was more important than the form. The essence of the Sikh way of life could not be reduced to formal observances. A Sikh should be a proof against sensual temptation and indulgence. He should always speak the truth (except when it was likely to cause harm to somebody). The watchwords of a Sikh should be continence, truth, contentment, mercy, duty, humility and service. He should not live on charity; he must earn his own livelihood through honest means.

A Sikh should associate himself with the Sant-Khālsā and should serve them as he would serve his Gurū. The Sikhs should love one another and work in consort; they should all come to the aid of anyone in a perilous plight. For a Sikh, the communal brotherhood was more important than the ties of kinship. A Sikh should be always ready to share his food, clothes and other belongings with the needy; and if he were in a position to be of any service to others, he should jump at the opportunity, regarding it as a mark of God's grace. Indeed, the best way to please the Gurū was to serve his Sikhs.

A Sikh woman was to share with men their religious beliefs and practices and their formal observances. She was to take *pāhul* to be initiated into the Khālsā, whether unmarried, married or widowed. She must get married; and re-marriage was allowed to her if she became a widow. In the social sphere, however, some restrictions were placed on her. A life of domesticity was her chief concern and she was to move in public preferably veiled. (The author regards woman as inferior to man because of her helplessness against her own sexual desires and her weaker intellect.)

He believes nevertheless that all men and women were equal in the eyes of their Creator. "All mankind is the progeny of the Immortal Being."<sup>19</sup> There was to be no distinction between the high and the low among the Khālsā; and there was to be only one caste, that of the

Sodhī-Khatrī, the caste of Gurū Gobind Singh, to which one came to belong immediately on one's initiation into the Khālsā. This however was the ultimate objective and, meanwhile, some concessions could be given to prejudice in favour of caste and sub-caste. For example, marriage was permissible within the same caste and sub-caste as much as an inter-caste marriage. Again, there were some Sikhs from whom the Khālsā should not eat—a *chūhrā*, a *chamiār*, a *sānsī*, for instance. But this exception was there only because of the nature of their occupation; otherwise there was nothing bad about their caste. Whosoever belonged to the Khālsā could dine with them : *ek panth, ek prasād*.<sup>20</sup>

The Khālsā Panth was not only a distinct but also a unique community in so far as it was in the sole possession of an undiluted religious truth. All other religions, though ordained by God for the salvation of mankind, had deviated from their true purposes; and they were doomed sooner or later to disappearance. It was not for the Khālsā, however, to become active agents of their destruction. It was open to the adherents of other religions to join the *panth* to save themselves. They could co-exist with the Sikhs in amicable relationship. A Sikh was never expected to eat alone; if he did so, then he must keep a meal for the first visitor, whether he was a Khālsā, a Hindū, or a Muslim. With a few minor and specific exceptions, all food as a rule was pure for the Khālsā, whether it came from a Hindū or a Muslim. Sikh girls must be married into Sikh families, but the Sikh boys could be married to non-Sikh girls, both Hindū and Muslim. The girls must be purified by initiation into the Khālsā. A Khālsā was expected to avoid armed conflict, but if there was no chance to escape, "he should not lose a moment and should not show his back."<sup>21</sup> The author visualized armed fight only with the Muslims and vaguely hoped for a political success of the Sikhs in the future.

In the ideal Sikh state, the political power was to be in the hands of the Sikhs. It was to be vested not in the *panth*, but in a single ruler, the *mahārājā* (or the *pādishāh*). He was to be assisted by a sagacious *vizīr* who could be trusted with delegated authority. There were to be several pious and learned advisory councillors who should constantly remind the ruler of his duties towards his subjects. There were no checks on the power and authority of the ruler, except those of his own conscience. In fact, the foremost duty of the ruler was to safeguard his own authority and to punish the slightest disregard of his commands (even by the closest of his relatives or the highest of his officials, including

the *vizīr*), with certain death. The royal commands should be received by the officials with a ceremonial deference. No official was to be allowed to overstep the bounds of his assigned position.

The whole kingdom was to be divided into provinces, each consisting of twenty-one *parganās*. Provincial administration was to be run with the help of a *faujdār-i-umdah*, a governor, a *diwān*, an officer of justice, a newsletter-writer and an audit officer. This provincial administration was almost a replica of the central government. The ruler must establish an elaborate system of *mansabdāri* in the army. The payment of revenue was to be in kind but all assessments were to be carefully made in terms of cash even for the tracts of land granted in *jāgīr*. A *kotwāl* was to be appointed in every important town and city. Much in the author's description of the administrative set-up reminds one of the Mughal government rather than the government of Ranjīt Singh.

A most important aspect of the government of the Sikh state was the administration of justice. An elaborate department of justice was to be personally supervised by the *mahārājā*; and an official guilty of a denial of justice to anyone was to be removed from service. The *mahārājā* was to be accessible to all his subjects demanding justice; and in judicial decisions no favour or partiality was to be shown to anyone. The chief officer of justice was in a sense placed above the *mahārājā* himself. The officer was to be given a seal of office on his appointment, with the inscription "the seal of justice, through the command of the Immortal Being." And even the *mahārājā* (as well as his son, grandson or his highest official) was obliged to appear before the court of justice on receiving a sealed summons.

Indeed the *raison d'etre* of the Sikh state was justice. The ruler should remember that power was granted to him for the administration of justice. In life hereafter in the court of the True King he would not be questioned about his devotion to God; but he would be asked how many under his rule had received comfort and how many had suffered misery. He would be held responsible for nothing else but justice in a very comprehensive sense. "What is justice? It is this : that the ruler should not appropriate to himself what is not his by right and he should not tolerate anyone's suffering : this is called justice."<sup>22</sup> Power without justice was hell; and devotion to God was inferior in merit to justice.

In a limited sense, the ideal Sikh state was to be a welfare state. In accordance with the author's comprehensive definition of justice, the ruler should institute a department of charities with its offices in all

cities, towns and even villages. He should take care that none in his kingdom was without food, dress or occupation. He should aid every indigent parent to enable him to give his daughter in marriage. In fact, he should fulfil every kind of want, particularly that of a householder. The ruler as a guardian of his subjects should constantly look after the welfare of his subjects. The underlying principle of revenue assessment should be the lightest of burden on the cultivator. The state taxes should be few and light. The ruler should always pray to God to grant him the capacity for discharging the duty of protecting and comforting his subjects.

Though the ruler in most of his public activities was to be neutral and patronage was to be dispensed without discrimination on the basis of religion, his special attention was due to the Khālsā Panth. *Gurmukhī* (Punjābī) was to be the official language of the state. All Sikh children were to be given instruction in the code of the Khālsā. This religious education was the ruler's personal responsibility, for he would have to account for half the misdeeds of his subjects just as he would get credit for half their good deeds. The ruler should not permit any other worship than that of the Immortal Being.

The Khālsā Panth, though a casteless society, had a social stratification of its own which was based on the difference in economic advantage. The ruler and his kinsmen were at the top of the social pyramid. The civil officials and *mansabdārs*, with their large *jāgīrs*, formed the social elite : they were to be instructed and enabled to live in a good style. The best of all occupations was trading, as distinct from petty shopkeeping which was not permitted to the Sikhs. That the traders were expected to be prosperous is evident from the plan of their houses in the cities and their way of living. Next to trading was agriculture. But the peasant was probably not expected to be better than the artisan. There are indications that the artisans formed a numerous class at a subsistence level. They were required to stick to their family occupation; no new openings were allowed to them. However, they were not to be addressed by their occupational name; and the deriders of their occupations were to be severely dealt with. No petty service was allowed to the Sikhs, except that in the army. But mention is made also of Sikh domestic servants.

From the foregoing brief analysis of the *Prem Sumārag*, the following points emerge for special consideration :

1. The apocryphal character of the work is explicable in terms of the

author's personal predicament and his anxiety to influence the members of his community. This might serve as a clue to an understanding of other anonymous works attributed to Gurū Gobind Singh.

2. The author accepted and perpetuated the idea that the mission of the Sikh Gurūs was divinely inspired and that the Gurūship had come to end with the death of Gurū Gobind Singh. There is a suggestion that the *Gurbānī* (including the writings of Gurū Gobind Singh) was to be the solace and guide (almost a Gurū) of the Sikhs.

3. The author, interpreting the mission of the Sikh Gurūs to their followers, works out the social and political implications of Sikh religious ideals. There is a persistent attempt at mutual conciliation between the ideal and the actual, suggesting that the social and religious attitude of the Sikhs had not become rigid.

4. Thinking primarily in religious terms, the author insists on equality among the Khālsā who were to form a casteless society. This ideal of equality could lead perhaps to social mobility. But the author does not visualize an egalitarian society. In fact, a built-in social stratification based on the difference in economic advantage is already there in his presentation of the Sikh social order.

5. As in the social so in the political sphere, the author does not see any relevance of the ideal of equality of Sikh institutions. The ideal Sikh state is not republican in character : it is a benevolent monarchy in which there is no institutional check on the power of the ruler and his use of this power. In the absence of a republican ideology in the political sphere, the establishment of a monarchical Sikh state becomes easily understandable. The so-called republican character of Sikh polity in the latter half of the eighteenth century might become more intelligible if the ideological basis of that policy is not taken for granted.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The exact date of composition of the *Prem Sumārag* is yet to be firmly established; but in the present state of our knowledge it may be considered as an early eighteenth-century work. Only a few of its complete manuscript copies are known to be in existence and they are not very old [see, *Punjābī Hath-likhān dī Sūchī*, Bhāshā Vibhāg, Punjāb, Patialā, I (1961), 334-35, II (1963), 219]. However, Professor S. S. Kohli states in his *Punjābī Sāhit dā Itihās* (Lāhore Book Shop, Ludhiānā, 1955, 216) that a manuscript of A.D. 1718 is in existence. Dr Mohan Singh too places the work among the early eighteenth-century writings in Punjābī

(*An Introduction to Punjābī Literature*, Amritsar, n. d.—Dedication, March 1, 1951—iii-42). Though based entirely on internal evidence, Bhāi Randhīr Singh has recently given an elaborate argument in support of his view that shortly after Bandā Singh's execution in A. D. 1716, the *Prem Sumārag* was written probably by a younger contemporary of Gurū Gobind Singh and learned associate of Bhāi Manī Singh (see the Editor's Introduction to the *Prem Sumārag*, Sikh History Society, Amritsar, 1953, pp. 71-99). Professor Kohli suggests that it might have been written by the anonymous author of the *Prem Anbodh*. For some other works of similar nature, see *Punjābī Hath-likhtān dī Sūchī* (cited above).

2. Bābā Rām Singh's letter to his followers, A.D. 1877, quoted, Bhāi Randhīr Singh (editor), *Prem Sumārag*, Sikh History Society, Amritsar, 1953, Introduction, pp. 77-78.
3. Kāhn Singh, *Gurmat Sudhākar*, Amritsar, 1922 (third edition), pp. 445-63.
4. Mohan Singh, *An Introduction to Punjābī Literature*, Amritsar (dedication, March, 1951), pp. 111-42.
5. Bhāi Randhīr Singh (editor), *Prem Sumārag*, Amritsar, 1953. (Hereafter cited simply as *Prem Sumārag*).
6. Tejā Singh, *The Religion of the Sikh Gurūs*, Amritsar, 1957 (published by the S. G. P. C.), p. 26.
7. *Prem Sumārag*, Introduction, pp. 99-101.
8. *An Introduction to Punjābī Literature*, pp. 111, 121-23.
9. *The Religion of the Sikh Gurūs*, p. 26.
10. *An Introduction to Punjābī Literature*, pp. 121-23.
11. *The Religion of the Sikh Gurūs*, p. 26.
12. *Loc. cit.*
13. All references are to *Prem Sumārag*.
14. Macauliffe, M. A., *The Sikh Religion*, Oxford, 1909, V. p. 299.
15. *Ibid.*, V, p. 301.
16. Bhāi Manī Singh's letter, quoted, *Prem Sumārag*, Introduction, p. 76.
17. See particularly *Prem Sumārag*, pp. 3, 4, 6-24, 42, 44-45, 48-52, 61, 66-67, 84-96, 98-103, 111, 127-28, 131-33, 137.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

## WHY DID THE BRITISH TURN A SOMERSAULT IN 1808 IN THEIR NEGOTIATIONS WITH RANJĪT SINGH ?

FAUJA SINGH

The British had raised no objections to Ranjīt Singh's expeditions of 1806 and 1807 into the cis-Sutlej region and the political changes effected by him during the campaigns. Rather, when some of the chiefs of the region had felt alarmed and approached the British Resident at Delhī for protection against Ranjīt Singh, they had been put off with an equivocal and non-committal reply.<sup>1</sup> The British at that time considered the Jamunā the limit of their Empire in the north-west and made no claim, formal or informal, to the territories westward of that river. The reaction against the forward policy of Lord Wellesley still ran high and the keynotes of the prevalent policy were withdrawal and restraint.<sup>2</sup> Even when, at the beginning of Lord Minto's period (Governor-General from 1807 to 1813), it was decided, in view of the deteriorating situation in the Near Middle East and in Europe<sup>3</sup> and to build up some counter-bulwarks of defence against the possible threat of a French, later a Franco-Russian, invasion of India, to send a diplomatic mission to Ranjīt Singh, no change was effected in the approved policy of indifference towards the chiefs of the cis-Sutlej region. While on the way to Ranjīt Singh's camp at Kasūr, Metcalfe, head of the British mission appointed for Lāhore, was offered by the Rājā of Patiālā, Sāhib Singh, the keys of his fort with the request that they might be returned to him as a gift from the British. The offer was politely declined<sup>4</sup> for the reason that it was not the intention of the British to enter into any commitment on this issue. The same point is evident from the instructions issued to Metcalfe on the eve of his departure for the Punjāb that, in case Ranjīt Singh made a demand for British recognition of his suzerainty over the states of the cis-Sutlej chiefs, the matter was to be referred to the Governor-General.<sup>5</sup> This, of course, was no acceptance of the Mahārājā's demand, but this was not its rejection also; all that the British sought at this juncture was time to watch the course of events in Europe before conceding the demand.



On meeting Ranjīt Singh, Metcalfe asked for a mutual defensive alliance for "the protection of the Punjāb and the British possessions in India against the apprehended invasion of Napoleon Bonaparte,"<sup>6</sup> and as part of the proposed agreement demanded, temporarily, some concessions essential to the prosecution of a defensive war against the enemy. The Mahārājā was sceptical about the *bona fides* of the British<sup>7</sup> and viewed their missions as no less than clever manoeuvres to extend their political influence. But he did not reject the proposal and made some counter-demands in which the pride of place was assigned to the British recognition of his sovereignty over the cis-Sutlej Sikh chiefs.<sup>8</sup> As previously settled, Metcalfe at once replied that it was beyond his competence. But he promised to refer the matter to the Governor-General, which he immediately did. While doing so, he expressed himself emphatically: "I take the liberty of expressing my opinion, founded upon the observations made in my present situation, that if it is in view to attach Ranjīt Singh to the British Government and to make him a friend by conciliation, the concession which he requires is essentially necessary for that purpose. As long as the British Government appears to be the bar, and the only bar, to his subjugation of the Sikhs and consequent aggrandisement, he will not, I conceive, be cordially attached to it; and if his attachment is to be gained by any means, none other are so likely to secure it as this concession, without which all other attempts to obtain his co-operation by conciliation would probably be fruitless."<sup>9</sup>

Pending the reply of the Governor-General, Ranjīt Singh decided to lead another expedition into the cis-Sutlej region and to force the issue by presenting the British with a *fait accompli*. Metcalfe followed in his wake up to a distance and then stopped at Gongrārā to wait for the expedition to come to an end. Ranjīt Singh had a triumphal march throughout. Farīdkot was captured, Mālerkotlā was made to pay tribute and Ambālā was annexed. The chief of Thānesar, Mahtāb Singh, tendered his submission. All along most of the prominent chiefs were in attendance upon him. The Rājā of Patiālā exchanged turbans with him as a mark of brotherhood. Ranjīt Singh returned from this expedition at the beginning of the month of December, 1808.

Metcalfe followed the Mahārājā and, on December 10, 1808, at Amritsar, presented to him a letter from the Governor-General followed by another note two days after, saying: "His Lordship has learned with great surprise and concern that the Mahārājā aims at the subjugation of chiefs who have long been considered under the protection of the

power ruling in the north of Hindustān. It is hereby declared that the British Government cannot consent that these chiefs should be subjugated by the Mahārājā and it is hereby announced that these chiefs, according to the established custom, are and will remain under the protection of the British Government."<sup>10</sup> And further: "The British Government cannot acknowledge any right of the Mahārājā to any territories that he may have taken possession of, situated between the Sutlej and the Jamunā, since the first reference of this question to the British Government. The Governor-General expects that the Mahārājā will restore all the places that he has taken possession of since that period to the former possessors and will confine his army to the right bank of the Sutlej."

Here was a complete diplomatic somersault or reversal of policy. The former British posture of indifference towards the cis-Sutlej states was now replaced by one of keen interest in the area and all claims to it of the ruler of Lāhore were rejected. For a legal sanction for the new posture, reference was made to their being successors of the Marāthās in regard to all their rights in the area, while their previous indifference to it was explained in terms of non-exercise of rights, which, it was emphasized, was not the same thing as relinquishment.<sup>11</sup>

The question now arises: What led to this sudden and complete change in the attitude of the British Government? A general belief, which has been upheld by Dr N. K. Sinhā<sup>12</sup> and many other writers, is that it was due to a marked improvement in the international situation. On a close examination, however, it appears to be wholly unfounded, for we find that the intelligence of such improvement came long after the new decision and, secondly, when it came, it softened the attitude of the British Government towards Ranjīt Singh rather than harden it.

The decision to take the cis-Sutlej rulers under British protection and to drive Ranjīt Singh beyond the Sutlej was taken in the second week of November, 1808, when Metcalfe was still encamped at Gongrārā and Ranjīt Singh was exchanging turbans at Patiālā with the local chief. The appointment of Lt-Col Ochterlony to the command of the military detachment, the chosen means for realizing the objects of the new policy, was made on November 14, 1808.<sup>13</sup> The improvement in the international situation, on the other hand, came much later. The Treaty of Dardanelles between England and Turkey was not concluded till January, 1809,<sup>14</sup> while that between England and Persia was signed still later in March, 1809. The rising in Spain had no doubt begun earlier,

but the favourable turn in the situation of the British there appeared much later. There is also definite recorded evidence showing that the first intelligence of "the favourable change in the aspect of affairs on the continent of Europe," was not received earlier than the third week of January, 1809.<sup>15</sup>

The real cause or causes, then, of the somersault in question must be sought elsewhere. The Governor-General's letter to Ochterlony of November 14, 1808, mentions<sup>16</sup> the following two things as factors leading to the decision of sending an armed division against Ranjīt Singh and his appointment to its command :

1. The course of events and transactions at the court of the Rājā of Lāhore.
2. Necessity to provide eventually for military arrangements of a more extensive nature in the north-western quarter of Hindustān.

The first obviously refers to the expedition that Ranjīt Singh led into the cis-Sutlej area after the arrival of Metcalfe in his camp. The manner in which the Mahārājā attempted to utilize his opportunities and the unbroken success attending it led to a reappraisal of his character and ability by the British. Metcalfe, who followed the expedition up to a distance to be able to continue the negotiations but later stopped at Gongrārā finding no prospect of success, acquired the uneasy feeling of the British being outmanoeuvred and his presence being exploited. During this period he despatched several communications to the Governor-General giving his fresh assessment of the situation and requesting an immediate declaration of the Government's stand in regard to the Mahārājā's cis-Sutlej claims. While doing so, he made some significant observations about Ranjīt Singh :

No part of his personal character presents any satisfactory assurance of cordiality, good faith, consistency or hearty co-operation. For want of consistency and good faith he is justly notorious; my despatches will have described repeated instances of deceit and evasion ; he has no regard for truth and can descend even to the violation of solemn promises ; and the whole tenor of his behaviour impresses me most strongly with the conviction of his total want of principle. In the crisis when his exertions may be required, he will, doubtless, without regard to previous engagements, act according to his view of his interests at the moment. If ever the agents of French intrigue should find a way to his ear, he is a character well suited for them. He would probably soon fall under

the guidance of a French negotiator who would flatter his pride and vanity, raise ambitious hopes by unbounded promises and work upon his credulity by any falsehoods.<sup>17</sup>

In the course of these communications, Metcalfe also made certain references to the uncomfortable position in which the cis-Sutlej chiefs were placed. Their jealousy of Ranjīt Singh's increasing power, he wrote, was undiminished, though after the refusal of British succour they were now in "compulsory attendance"<sup>18</sup> upon him. He pointed out that this feeling of jealousy could always, if it was desired, be exploited by the British to their advantage.

These opinions of Metcalfe, though not advanced by the writer as arguments against conceding the demand of the Mahārājā (for he was still arguing in favour of it), made a deep impact upon the Governor-General and his colleagues who changed their approach to the problem. "The expectation of making a friend of him [Ranjīt Singh] was abandoned as vain and it was determined to restrain him in that quarter in which he might be considered most dangerous as an enemy."<sup>19</sup> It was therefore decided to force the Sikh ruler to give up immediately all the conquests he had lately made and to fix the Sutlej as the boundary of the British empire. Regarding the expediency of this decision, Metcalfe later on wrote :

The advantages of having the Sutlej instead of the Jamunā for our boundary in that direction were: first as acquiring an addition of power and influence for ourselves ; secondly as abstracting in a still greater degree power and influence from a political enemy ; thirdly as preventing the union of the Sikh nation under an aspiring ruler of extraordinary character ; fourthly as interposing between our frontier and that of a powerful rival the territories of our dependent states, by which war, defensive or offensive, would be kept at a distance from our country ; fifthly for the greater security afforded to the capital city, and an important political post of Dihlee, to which otherwise the power of Ranjīt Singh would have approximated within a few miles, affording him the opportunity of attacking it suddenly in the event of our being involved in war with other powers ; lastly perhaps the assumption of our proper station as the protectors of the weak and the oppressors of the oppressor was not the least of the advantages of the arrangement, with reference to its impression on all parties.<sup>20</sup>

Shorn of the ideas induced by hindsight, for instance the first and last

points, this statement of Metcalfe is clearly indicative of the considerations that weighed with the British Government in deciding to oppose Ranjīt Singh. But though very important, the provision of measures for external security against the political ambitions of the Mahārājā was not the only consideration. An equally important one at the moment, though its importance diminished after the passing off of the French menace, was to have a dependable system of defence in the region of the Punjāb against the threatened French or Franco-Russian invasion of India. As noticed earlier, this fact is brought out clearly in the instructions issued to the commander of the military force detailed to proceed against Ranjīt Singh. The French danger, which had provided the motive force for the despatch of the Metcalfe mission to the Punjāb, was not yet past, and it was feared that in the event of this danger materializing the presence of Ranjīt Singh so close to the British frontiers, if he was really as unscrupulous and as easily amenable to French intrigues as Metcalfe had portrayed him, would serve to enhance rather than reduce the dangers apprehended from the north-west. Hence, the immediate necessity was to bring the whole of the cis-Sutlej region into their sphere of influence. The matter was so urgent that no obstacle or impediment coming in the way was to be tolerated. Ranjīt Singh was to be driven out by force, if he showed any resistance. The objections, if any, raised by the chiefs at the advance of the British troops into their territories were to be ruled out and ignored and they were to be told that "no considerations will induce the British Government to abandon the policy which it was now resolved to adopt."<sup>21</sup>

However, destruction of Ranjīt Singh's influence southward of the Sutlej was only the first imperative of the new British policy. That this was to be followed by negotiations with the Sikh ruler for the conclusion of a defensive alliance against France and, in the case of his intransigence, by subversion of his power even in the trans-Sutlej area is clearly indicated in a letter of Edmonstone, Foreign Secretary to the Governor-General, addressed to Ochterlony, on March 13, 1809: "If war had taken place with Ranjīt Singh and had terminated in the subversion of his dominion, Government would have judged it consistent with the principles of a wise and liberal policy to restore to the several chiefs of the Punjāb the possessions and the rights of which they have been deprived by the systematic usurpation and ambition of Ranjīt Singh."<sup>22</sup> This was considered a wise and liberal policy in contrast to the more extreme policy of direct occupation.

With the object of achieving these aims, a strong military force headed by Lt-Col Ochterlony crossed the Jamunā and entered the cis-Sutlej region on January 16, 1809, followed by another force under the command of St. Leger. About a month earlier, orders had been passed concerning the withdrawal<sup>23</sup> of the British embassy from the court of Ranjīt Singh and, with the march of British troops now, the stage seemed set for an open rupture with the Mahārājā. But before things had gone very far, the arrival of favourable intelligence from Europe rendered extreme measures unnecessary. On January 23, 1809, fresh instructions were issued<sup>24</sup> to Metcalfe enjoining upon him a policy of pacification towards Ranjīt Singh. A week later, similar instructions were sent to Ochterlony.

As the intelligence lately received of the favourable change in the aspect of affairs on the continent of Europe justifies a conviction that the projects of the French against the British possessions in India must, if not entirely abandoned, at least be so far suspended as to render any extraordinary preparation of defence unnecessary, the views and intentions of the Government under which your instructions of the 29th ultimo were framed are materially altered. The object of stationing a military force in the territories of the Sikh chiefs south of the Sutlej, which before had reference to the approach of a European army, is now limited to the security of the territory between the Sutlej and Jamunā against the encroachment of Rājā Ranjīt Singh; and the reduction or subversion of the power of that chieftain which, under other circumstances, was considered an event highly desirable and expected to be a probable consequence, though not a settled purpose of the approximation of our troops to the frontier of the Punjāb, is no longer of the same importance to our interests. The Governor-General, therefore, although still resolved on grounds distinct from the eventual invasion of a European enemy to protect the territories in question from the encroachment of Ranjīt Singh, is disposed with a view both to facilitate an accommodation of the differences with that chieftain and to remove that source of irritation and of mutual distrust which the presence of a British force near the frontier of Ranjīt Singh is calculated to create, to fix the position of the detachment at a much greater distance from the frontier of the Punjāb than was originally intended,—if not to withdraw to Kurnāul.<sup>25</sup>

It was in these changed circumstances that the question of signing a

treaty between the two parties was considered and brought to a conclusion. Ranjīt Singh had suffered a great humiliation and was anxious to save himself and his little state from its evil consequences by securing a treaty of friendship from the British. The British, too, quite understood this and were ready to help and pacify him. The result was what has been called the Treaty of Amritsar, 1809.

From the foregoing discussion it will be seen that it was not the improvement in the international situation but the reverse of it that led to the somersault in British diplomacy regarding Ranjīt Singh in 1808. The presentation of an ultimatum to the Mahārājā and the decision to send a military force against him were necessitated by the urgency of building up a reliable defensive system against the French in the north-west as much as, if not more than, they were called for by the exigencies of erecting a buffer between the British possessions and those of Ranjīt Singh.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. M. S. Mehtā, *Lord Hastings and the Indian States*, p. 10.
3. N. K. Sinhā, *Ranjīt Singh*, Calcuttā, 1951, pp. 24, 25. British influence in Persia and Turkey was replaced by French. In May, 1807, the Treaty of Finkenstein was signed between France and Persia. Turkey did not conclude any anti-British alliance, but there too England was replaced by France as the most favoured power. The Treaty of Tilsit was signed in July, 1807, whereby Napoleon and the Czar of Russia agreed to make a joint invasion of India.
4. N. K. Sinhā, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
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8. *Foreign Secret and Separate Consultations*, November 28, 1808, No. 4.
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11. *Punjab Government Records*, Ludhiānā Agency, 1808-15, vol. II, p. 37, A. Seton to Ochterlony, January 23, 1809. "The mere non-exercise of a power, while unaccompanied by any declaration, can never be considered as tantamount to the relinquishment of the right of exercise."
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19. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 15. Written by Metcalfe for Lord Hastings in 1814.
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## BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS SIKHS, 1849-57

KRIPAL CHANDRA YADAV

On March 29, 1849, in the last of the Sikh *darbārs* held at Lāhore, Mahārājā Duleep Singh and the Council of the Regency signed their submission to the East India Company.<sup>1</sup> Soon after, the British colours were hoisted on the citadel of Lāhore and "the Punjāb, every inch of it, was proclaimed to be a portion of the British Empire in India."<sup>2</sup> The machinery of government was set in motion by the appointment of a Board of Administration.<sup>3</sup> It consisted of three members. The first Member, or rather the president, was the soldier-statesman, Henry Lawrence. He was well known for his sympathy towards the Sikhs. He had lately directed the affairs of the Lāhore State in the name of the Mahārājā, and had most intimate knowledge of the Sikh character.<sup>4</sup> The second member was John Lawrence, the younger brother of Henry Lawrence. He was an officer of the Company's civil service, and had distinguished himself in matters of revenue settlement in the North-West Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) and the Jullundur Doāb in the Punjāb.<sup>5</sup> The third member was Charles Mansel, a covenanted civilian, who had a high reputation as one of the ablest financiers in India.<sup>6</sup>

The functions of the Board were divided into political, revenue and judicial departments and each member had charge of one of these, though all were jointly responsible if any question of more than ordinary importance arose.<sup>7</sup>

The whole of the province was divided into seven divisions, usually called commissionerships.<sup>8</sup> These divisions were further divided into twenty-seven districts according to convenience. The officers by whom the administration of these units was conducted were commissioners, deputy commissioners, assistant commissioners and extra-assistant commissioners. While the first three grades consisted of covenanted or commissioned European officers, to the fourth belonged both Europeans and Indians.<sup>9</sup> Dalhousie appointed best available officers to these posts. In his own words : "They have all been selected for their known and assumed qualifications. The Governor-General has no doubt that you [Board of Administration] will find them as efficient body of public

servants as have ever been employed in a single province in India.”<sup>10</sup> They were given inducement for hard work by “large promises” of lucrative pay and rapid promotion.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, they rendered excellent service;<sup>12</sup> and field work and hard labour went on under all the inconveniences of climate, absence of comforts and periodical visitations of diseases.<sup>13</sup>

The Board of Administration at the very outset took in hand the work of suppression and coercion of the warlike people of the Punjāb, especially the Sikhs, with the help of the army of occupation comprising 60,000 soldiers and a police force of 15,000 men.<sup>14</sup> They assumed an attitude of enmity towards the Sikhs and tried their level best to demoralize them completely.

The first target of suppression was Mahārājā Duleep Singh.<sup>15</sup> The eleven-year-old<sup>16</sup> Mahārājā was, at the very outset, made to resign “for himself, his heirs and his successors, all right, title and claim to the sovereignty of the Punjāb or to any sovereign power whatever”<sup>17</sup> in return of a pension “not less than four and not exceeding five lakhs of rupees per annum.”<sup>18</sup>

All the State property, the immense collection of valuable articles and jewels, so zealously collected by Mahārājā Ranjit Singh was confiscated. Justifying this action Dalhousie remarked : “In liquidation of the accumulated debt due to this Government by the State of Lāhore, and for the expenses of the war, I have confiscated the property of the State to the use of Honourable East India Company.”<sup>19</sup> All this property was soon transferred from Ranjit Singh’s *Toshākhānā* (treasury) to the Moti Mandir and made over to the charge of Dr Login. Giving the value of these articles, Dr Login wrote to his wife thus : “I can’t yet arrive at a valuation of jewels (excluding of the Koh-i-Noor), but I don’t think it will be far short of a million, and the other valuable properties much more.”<sup>20</sup> Out of this valuable collection, many things of historical importance were sent to the Museum of the East India Company ; while other articles such as the weapons of Gurū Gobind Singh were purchased by Dalhousie himself.<sup>21</sup> The rest of the State property was put to public sale.<sup>22</sup>

According to the third term of the Treaty of Lāhore, dated March 29, 1849, the Koh-i-Noor was to be “surrendered by the Mahārājā of Lāhore to the Queen of England.”<sup>23</sup> Dalhousie considered it as “a historical emblem of conquest in India,”<sup>24</sup> He became ambitious enough to send it to the Queen and even without waiting to know the opinion of the

Directors of East India Company, he wrote a letter to the Queen on April 7, 1849, as follows : "The Governor-General has now the honour and gratification of announcing to Her Majesty that the war is at end and that the Punjāb has been declared to be a portion of Your Majesty's empire in India, in evidence whereof and in token of the Mahārājā's submission to Your Majesty, the Governor-General, if his policy shall receive sanction of the Government, will have the honour of transmitting to Your Majesty from Lāhore the famous jewel of the Mughals, the Koh-i-Noor, the Mountain of Light."<sup>25</sup> Dalhousie wanted the jewel to be surrendered to the Queen by Duleep Singh, but the Directors of the East India Company did not approve of this idea and presented it themselves on July 3, 1850.<sup>26</sup>

The young Mahārājā Duleep Singh was placed under the tutelage of Dr John Login. He was removed from the Punjāb to Fatehgarh, in Uttar Pradesh, and was not allowed to be visited by any person without the permission of the Government. There Dr Login educated and moulded the young Mahārājā in a Christian manner without any hesitation. Ultimately, his efforts bore fruit and on March 8, 1853, Mahārājā Duleep Singh was converted to Christianity.<sup>27</sup> He sailed to England in April, 1854.<sup>28</sup>

Mahārānī Jind Kaur, the widow of Mahārājā Ranjīt Singh and mother of Mahārājā Duleep Singh, whom Dalhousie considered to be the only person of "manly understanding in the Punjāb,"<sup>29</sup> was subjected to much humiliation and oppression. A prisoner ever since the conclusion of the first Anglo-Sikh War, her hand was suspected in everything that went wrong in the Punjāb. For instance, although a closely guarded prisoner, she was suspected of having instigated the rebellion in Multān in 1848.<sup>30</sup> Consequently she was exiled from the Punjāb on May 23, 1848,<sup>31</sup> and was detained as a prisoner at Banāras till April 4, 1849, when she was transferred to the Fort of Chunār on the suspicion of making a plot to escape from Banāras.<sup>32</sup> Immediately after her arrival at Chunār she escaped and proceeded towards Nepāl.<sup>33</sup> Her flight came to light on April 19, and she was hotly chased. But she had safely crossed the Indian borders into Nepāl and reached its capital on April 27, 1849.<sup>34</sup> The British authorities confiscated all her belongings and property at Banāras and Chunār.<sup>35</sup> The Governor-General wrote to the Mahārājā of Nepāl asking him to "prevent her from all injurious intrigues against the British Government."<sup>36</sup>

But it seems probable that the Nepāl authorities never put any restric-

tion on the Mahārānī, and she carried on correspondence with the ex-Sardārs of the Lāhore *darbār*, most of whom were in jail in the Allāhābād Fort sometimes asking about their welfare, sometimes instigating them against the British.<sup>37</sup> Upon this the Nepāl authorities were pressed hard to prevent the Mahārānī from such intrigues.<sup>38</sup> So, the relations between the Mahārānī Jind Kaur and the Mahārājā of Nepāl became strained and the former planned to go to some other place in search of help. But the British Government closed every avenue of escape to her.

During the "Mutiny" of 1857 she tried her luck again. She sent messages to prominent Sikhs in the Punjāb to rise against the British. But all was in vain, and she remained in agony and unhappiness. She died in London in 1863 "prematurely old, well-nigh blind, broken and subdued in spirit."<sup>39</sup>

Along with the suppression of the Mahārājā and his mother, the ruination of the entire aristocracy was planned.<sup>40</sup> Dalhousie was quite determined that "the chiefs and fief holders of the Punjāb should be effectively deprived of the power of doing mischief."<sup>41</sup> John Lawrence fully agreed with the Governor-General.<sup>42</sup>

In his dealings with the aristocracy, John Lawrence first of all took up the cases of those chiefs who had fought against the British in the two Sikh wars. He confiscated outright the estates of some twenty-five chiefs,<sup>43</sup> the revenue yield of which had amounted to Rs. 11,31,865 per annum and gave an annual pension of Rs. 42,670 in return. Besides, they were deprived of their ranks.<sup>44</sup> Many of them were put under surveillance in their own houses, while others were exiled from the Punjāb and kept as closely guarded prisoners at such places as Calcuttā and Allāhābād.<sup>45</sup> Those who were permitted to live in the Punjāb were put under severe restrictions. They were not allowed to go beyond the boundary of their villages without the special written sanction of the Resident. They were not to keep any arms in their possession on any pretence. They were strictly forbidden to correspond with any of the party who were concerned in the "late rebellion." The number of their retainers was prescribed at twenty, and under no circumstances it could be more than that. They were not to permit any person to call on them. Should any one come of his own accord, the meeting should be avoided and the circumstances reported to the Resident.<sup>46</sup> They were warned that their conduct was watched collectively and individually and any infringement of the prescribed rules would render them liable to severest punishment. In that case, they were told: "They would be

considered as enemies of the British Government and on no account pardoned."<sup>47</sup>

The turn of the neutral *jāgīrdārs* and holders of free land tenures came next. The Governor-General sent specific instructions to give them new grants on the condition of production of valid documents justifying their claim of ownership, under the Board's seal and the Secretary's signature declaring that the grant was a free gift of the British Government.<sup>48</sup> The Board acted quite promptly. Holdings were sealed, records were inspected, oral evidence was taken, the limits of holdings were surveyed and the application of the proceeds was tested.<sup>49</sup> Pension cases were also investigated in the same manner. A special officer under the Board was appointed to investigate army, civil and political pensions.<sup>50</sup> In all, some 10,000 cases of rent-free tenures and as many more of pensions came before the Board for decision.<sup>51</sup>

On this question, serious difference of opinion arose between the two brothers, Henry Lawrence and John Lawrence Henry. Lawrence, as head of the administration, wanted to recognize in the *jāgīrdārs* the aristocracy of the land. John Lawrence, in his capacity as local Chancellor of the Exchequer and in pursuance of the imperialistic policy of Dalhousie, thought that "the *jāgīrdārs* deserved little but maintenance; that none should intervene between the people and their alien rulers." By tightening the grip on the land tax, and preventing any but a small part of it going to the coffers of the aristocracy, he clearly stood for their destruction.<sup>52</sup> Apparently, all the cases of difference were referred to Dalhousie who invariably agreed with John's opinion.<sup>53</sup> Henry Lawrence felt humiliated. He also thought it as "most impolitic" and dangerous.<sup>54</sup> His heart ached when he thought: "The *jāgīrdārs* may think that they had been unfairly deprived of rights which they had been justified in expecting to retain and for the loss of which they would impute the blame to him."<sup>55</sup> He, therefore, tendered his resignation, which was accepted by Dalhousie.

On February 4, 1853, the Board of Administration was abolished, and administration was placed in the hands of John Lawrence. He was made the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab vested with powers to administer the province like the Board of Administration. Practically, no change was introduced in the administrative machinery by John Lawrence, and he worked on the same old lines which were laid down in 1849.<sup>56</sup> The aristocracy continued to be suppressed as before. Even the last touching farewell letter of Henry Lawrence to him [John Lawrence] was

of no avail : "As this is my last day at Lāhore, I venture to offer you a few words of advice, which I hope you will take in the spirit it is given, and that you will believe that if you preserve the peace of the country, and make the people high and low happy, I shall have no regrets that I vacated the field for you. It seems to me that you look on almost all questions affecting *jāgeerdārs* and *māfeedārs* in a perfectly different light from all others ; in fact, that you consider them as nuisance and as enemies. If anything like this be your feelings, how can you expect to do them justice, as between man and man?... I think we are doubly bound to treat them kindly, because they are down, and because they and their hangers-on have still some influence as affecting the public peace and contentment. I would simply do to them as I would be done by."<sup>57</sup>

Not only the chiefs and landlords, but other influential classes, such as Bedīs and Sodhīs, were also "neglected, lowered and crushed."<sup>58</sup> In the words of a contemporary Englishman : "The men of talent, the men of social or religious influence have lost their high positions. They have no field of enterprise left to them. They are condemned, henceforth, to the indulgence of discontented feelings or to inglorious ease."<sup>59</sup>

It was the Sikh soldiery that the British Government dreaded the most. Immediately after annexation a general muster of all the Sikh soldiery was called at Lāhore where nearly 50,000 persons were paid and disbanded.<sup>60</sup> Scarcely a tenth of the entire army were taken into British pay.<sup>61</sup> It was not that the high soldierly qualities of the Sikhs were not known to the British, but they considered the enlistment of such men in the ranks of their army dangerous. This belief was further confirmed by the Sikh chiefs of the cis-Sutlej states. Rājā Sarūp Singh of Jind told John Lawrence : "The Sikhs rebelled against and killed their own chiefs, is it likely they will care more for you? My own troops have twice mutinied against me and I have security that they will not do so again."<sup>62</sup> The Mahārājā of Patiālā warned the Government that "Punjābī troops should on no account exceed one-third of the whole of our native army."<sup>63</sup>

These warnings did not go unheeded. Of the three Presidency armies, Bombay and Madrās did not enrol Sikhs at all. In the Bengāl army their number in the regular regiments, according to the official returns, was 3,000.<sup>64</sup> But, truly speaking, even that number was not correct. "We should be nearer the mark," remarked a contemporary British officer, "were we to say half that number (i.e. 3,000/2)."<sup>65</sup>

Their number even in the Punjāb irregular regiments, not to talk of the regular regiments, was very meagre. In the beginning there used to be not more than 80 Sikhs in a regiment.<sup>66</sup> But in 1851 some relaxation was made and it was recommended that the number should be raised to 200 in every regiment.<sup>67</sup> It is surprising that even this official recommendation was never transformed into a working reality, and it failed ultimately.<sup>68</sup>

The Sikhs in the British army, whether in the regular or irregular forces, were oppressed by their officers. They were looked down upon as enemies and were demoralized by direct and indirect tactics. They were called "dirty sepoy" and many a European officer wished them to cut their hair "forgetting that the very essence of Sikhism lies in its locks."<sup>69</sup> Even the Hindustānī sepoy, who were in a great majority in every regiment of the Bengāl army, maltreated the Sikhs. Consequently, many Sikhs were driven out of these regiments and "not a shadow of encouragement was given [by the British officers] to counteract the quiet but persistent opposition of the Oudh and Bihār men."<sup>70</sup>

The policy of severity was not confined to Sardārs and soldiers only, but was applied with equal harshness to the common people of the Punjāb.

The State had been under the British hardly for six weeks when measures for disarming its people, to whom "the mere sight of the steel could draw on to fight,"<sup>71</sup> were conceived, promulgated and executed by the Board of Administration.<sup>72</sup> All classes of people, other than Europeans and government servants, were prohibited from keeping or carrying arms, for that would give "the best security against internal rising as well as the strongest guarantee for obedience to the common mandates of the civil power." Contravention of these rules was punishable by heavy fines and imprisonment. For the first offence of this nature, there was imposition of a fine not exceeding Rs. 1,000 or in default of payment a simple imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months. Any person convicted a second time for the breach of these rules was liable to a fine not exceeding Rs. 2,000 or in default of payment to a simple imprisonment for twelve months and, in addition, for resumption of whatever *jāgīr* or rent-free holding he might possess and the confiscation of his rights or interest in any boat, house, building, or land where the weapon would have been found.<sup>73</sup>

The people were prohibited from possessing or selling or manufacturing arms and ammunition of war. Defaulters were punished with

rigorous severity, while rewards were given to those who gave clues or information leading to the discovery of concealed powder and arms.<sup>74</sup> In a very short time, nearly 1,20,000 arms of different kinds<sup>75</sup> were seized or surrendered.<sup>76</sup>

Next, the Government turned its attention towards agriculturists. Regular settlements of their lands for periods of fifteen to thirty years were taken in hand. Very complicated as this work was, it required many years for its completion. During the intervening period settlements made by the Resident (1846-48) in the Punjab proper were temporarily upheld; and in the rest of the State, summary settlements were made for five years.<sup>77</sup> Both these settlements had none of the advantages of a good settlement for "they were unavoidably made of great expedition and generally by officers who possessed but little previous knowledge of the subject."<sup>78</sup> These officers made rapid tours through their respective districts and fixed the assessment on the basis of the average revenue of the previous three to five years on the testimony of the headmen and accountants of the villages.<sup>79</sup> Much disliked by the people, these settlements continued in force in most parts of the State till 1855, when they were replaced by regular settlements.<sup>80</sup>

John Lawrence said that the new settlements had lowered the rates of assessment and had made them lighter than those in existence during the Sikh rule, the reduction being from five to fifty per cent for different regions and twenty-five per cent for the whole of the State.<sup>81</sup> But the peasants did not feel so, because the British system pressed more heavily upon them than the older system.

John Lawrence's calculation of reduction in land revenue by one-fourth was based upon a false comparison with the revenue assessment under the Sikh Government on paper. In reality, in the Mughal fashion of revenue collection which the Sikh rulers copied exactly,<sup>82</sup> the full revenue assessed (*jamā*) was never collected, but only a proportion of it (*hāsil*). For instance, Bayazid informs us that in Akbar's reign the *hāsil* of a *jāgīr* in Sunām (Hissār) was many times less than its *jamā*.<sup>83</sup> In the next reign, says Pelsaert, "in many regions only half the nominal assessment was generally realized."<sup>84</sup> During the reigns of Shāhjahān and Aurangzeb the same practice was followed and no attempt was made by either sovereign to make the *jamā* correspond exactly with the *hāsil*. "On the other hand," says Irfān Habīb, "the difference between them was recognized for a fact and the annually changing ratio between the receipts and the standing assessment was marked out for each *mahal*



and expressed in terms of month-proportions (*māhawār*).<sup>86</sup> Thus where the current *hāsil* equalled half *jamā*, the *jāgīr* was styled 'six-monthly' (*shash-māha*); where it was one-fourth, 'three-monthly' (*sih-māha*), and so on.<sup>86</sup>

The Englishmen, not to speak of ordinary revenue officials, and even the historians among them of the agrarian system of medieval India till the time of Moreland, did not understand the difference between the terms *jamā* and *hāsil*. The fact is borne out by Moreland who said: "Following the previous translations, I had treated these terms [*jamā* and *hāsil*] as synonymous, but a distinction must be drawn between them."<sup>87</sup>

In the earlier days wherever the British officials went they carried out settlements without knowing the difference between *jamā* and *hāsil*. In consequence, they made overassessments everywhere. For instance, in Bengāl "the revenue though permanently fixed was not at first very light. It is admitted by good judges to have been the reverse."<sup>88</sup> In Madras, "the rates were pitched too high."<sup>89</sup> The North-West Province was "intolerably overassessed."<sup>90</sup> The same was the case with the Punjāb. Arnold, the author of *Dalhousie's Administration*, has summed up the whole problem in a sentence thus: "The assessment, though reduced (on paper), pressed more heavily than the old dues"<sup>91</sup> John Lawrence himself admitted that, as soon as the British settlements came in vogue, the people made loud and general complaints against them.<sup>92</sup> That assessments were really very heavy is also revealed by the fact that these settlements were changed time and again in every district before the outbreak of revolt in 1857. Yet the people did not feel relieved.

Secondly, the agriculturists suffered a loss of indirect income with the advent of the British. During the Sikh rule, the money which was collected in the shape of revenue and other taxes with one hand was given back with the other hand to its soldiery and civil employees who in their turn remitted it to their villages. The whole process has been explained by John Lawrence thus: "Every village sent recruits for the army, who again remitted their savings to their homes; many a highly taxed village paid half its revenue from its military earnings."<sup>93</sup> He further says: "Large sums of money, which under the Sikh rule found their way direct to the villages of the Mānjhā, now flow into Oudh territory."<sup>94</sup> A vast amount formerly expended on wood, lime and iron is now carried to a distance or goes to enrich our neighbour Mahārājā Gulāb Singh. The labour employed in our public works does not belong

to agricultural classes [unlike the Sikh rule]."<sup>95</sup>

Next, the sharp decline in the prices of agricultural commodities that came with the advent of the British rule hit the peasant's economy hard. This unprecedented fall in prices was due to the combination of two factors, namely growth in total produce and decline in demand following the loss of employment by a large number of people. The following table illustrates the decline in prices very clearly :<sup>96</sup>

| Year    | Price of wheat<br>per maund | Price of Indian<br>corn per maund |
|---------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1841-51 | Rs. 2/-                     | Rs. 1-11/16                       |
| 1851-52 | Rs. 1/-                     | Rs. 14/16                         |
| 1852-53 | Rs. 1-3/16                  | Rs. 1-1/16                        |
| 1853-54 | Rs. 1-3/16                  | Rs. 2-2/16                        |
| 1854-55 | Rs. 1/-                     | Rs. 13/16                         |
| 1855-56 | Rs. 1/1/16                  | Rs. 14/16                         |

Thus, between 1851 and 1856, the prices of wheat and corn (*jowār*, *bājra*, etc.) declined practically by 50 per cent. This largely made the new assessments meaningless.<sup>97</sup>

Besides, overassessment, the new legislation of the British Government, according to which land began to hold value as a security against loans, added to the miseries of the agriculturists.<sup>98</sup> The village money-lender—the *baniā*—who was more intelligent than the farmers, exploited the situation. To him these new legislations were “as welcome as...the discovery of a mine on his land to Australian settler, and he began to lend money against the peasants' land.”<sup>99</sup> The deteriorating financial condition of the peasants due to overassessment, stoppage of indirect income, decline in prices of foodgrains and high rates of interest on money borrowed to pay land revenue rendered it impossible for most of them to pay back their debts. This resulted in “the gradual transfer of soil from its natural lords—the cultivators—to the astute bankers” with the help of the British courts.<sup>100</sup> Mortgages such as were almost unheard of in the Khālsā days appeared in every village.<sup>101</sup> In consequence, the peasants greatly disliked these legislations, their framers and the *baniās*, and when occasion came in 1857, they rose *en masse* and attacked the three targets of their hatred as best they could.<sup>102</sup>

The Punjāb police was admittedly effective against dacoits and *thugs* and equally admittedly infamous for corruption and oppression of the people. Even such high authorities as the Chief Commissioner of the

Punjab, John Lawrence, admitted fully that ruthless oppression of the people went on in the district of Ludhiānā “under the immediate cognizance or direction of the Deputy Commissioner, Mr Brerton himself.” “The houses of the wealthy citizens had been causelessly searched,” he further remarked, “property seized on such occasions was detained for lengthened periods;...many parties were thrown into prison, and lay there for weeks without charges being exhibited against them.” The Deputy Commissioner had been followed about from district to district by certain police officers and informers, whom he employed wherever he went, and these men had been the main authors of mischief. What these mischiefs were like may be seen from the following instances. On the suspicion of being thieves in a case called “Koop robbery case,” some eight respectable *zamīndārs* of the Rāipur village were seized. They were made over to a Fatehjang Khān by Brerton. Fatehjang kept them in confinement for three months in his own house and subjected them to severe tortures. They were Sikhs and the “hair of their heads were tied to their leg-irons...wooden pegs were driven into the joints of their elbows and other sensitive parts.” Another case was of a woman from whom they wanted to secure a confession. She was placed “under an August sun.” Fatehjang “tied a bag of filth over her mouth and nose.”<sup>103</sup> Such atrocious tortures filled the hearts of the people with terror, and insecurity prevailed not only in and around the places where such tortures were enacted but far and wide throughout the Punjab. Even Dalhousie admitted in his minute that such happenings had “brought disgrace on one portion of the British administration and have subjected a large number of British subjects to gross injustice, to arbitrary imprisonment, and cruel torture.”<sup>104</sup>

The British not only destroyed the royal house of the Sikhs and ruined their nobility, but also launched a violent attack on their social organization by destroying the village communities and *panchāyats*. This organization was built up according to their social requirements and under it “they felt themselves securer and happier.”<sup>105</sup> Its destruction brought social instability and the people felt insecure and unhappy.<sup>106</sup>

The alien rule ruined the economic prosperity of the Sikhs. It brought them unemployment. Several thousand Sikh soldiers lost their jobs on the day of the disbandment of the Khālsā army. In the same week many more were thrown out of the civil jobs.<sup>107</sup> The land revenue organization pauperized the Sikh peasantry.<sup>108</sup> With the extinction of the national government, the incoming of money in different shapes stopped

altogether. The large sums of money, which would formerly have circulated in the Punjāb, went to other parts of the British Empire after the annexation.<sup>109</sup>

There was an attack on the Sikh religion, too.<sup>110</sup> Christian missions were established in the Punjāb as a "thanks-offering to Almighty God for victory granted over a terrible foe"<sup>111</sup> in 1849. By 1850 about 2,000 converts, many of them Sikhs, had been added to the previous thousands by the missionaries.<sup>112</sup> In April, 1852, a direct attempt at converting Sikhs was made by the establishment of a Protestant Mission Station at Amritsar, the holy city of the Sikhs. In July of the same year the first convert by the centre was baptized. He was a Sikh attendant in a Gurdwārā of a nearby village. His name was Dāud Singh. The conversion ceremony was performed openly in the vicinity of Darbār Sāhib.<sup>113</sup> In 1853, the Sikh Mahārājā Duleep Singh was converted to Christianity, perhaps in the hope that his example would be followed by many Sikhs.<sup>114</sup>

The Christian missionaries denounced in public places, in the streets and bāzārs the "heathen scripture," the Sikh *Granth*.<sup>115</sup> In the press, attacks were made on Sikhism. Opinions by high British officials were expressed anonymously for the destruction of the Golden Temple of Amritsar, "the centre of the hopes and aspirations of a great people and which may some day prove the rallying points of our [British] enemies."<sup>116</sup> In the army there were instances of Colonels and Commanders openly abusing the Sikhs. They asked them to cut their hair "forgetting that the very essence of Sikhism lay in its locks."<sup>117</sup> The Bedīs, the priestly class of the Sikhs, to whom the Khālsā Rāj had given free tenures in lieu of their religious services, were dispossessed of the greater part of their tenures. By such measures "their religion [Sikhism] had received a rude shock."<sup>118</sup>

As a matter of policy the spirit of the Khālsā was killed. Their language, traditions, manners and customs were suppressed. How far the British were successful in their venture can be seen from the following quotation from *The Administration Report* (1849-51): "The Sikh faith and ecclesiastical policy is rapidly going where the Sikh political ascendancy has already gone . . . These men joined [Sikhism] in thousands and they now desert in equal numbers . . . The sacred tank at Amritsar is less thronged than formerly, and the attendance at annual festivals is diminishing yearly. Initiatory ceremony for adult persons is now rarely performed.<sup>119</sup> . . . Gurmukhī is rapidly falling into desuetude. The Punjābī

as a spoken language is also losing its currency, and degenerating into a merely provincial and rustic dialect."<sup>120</sup>

All these factors generated a feeling of hatred and hostility in the minds of the Sikhs against the British. A free expression of these feelings is witnessed in their behaviour throughout the critical days of 1857.<sup>121</sup> The imperialistic propaganda that Sikhs helped the British in 1857 can neither stand against the background described above nor be supported by any historical evidence.<sup>122</sup>

The Sikh chiefs of Patiālā, Nābhā, Jīnd, Farīdkot and their subjects<sup>123</sup> under their tight control, of course, gave great help to the British. These chiefs owed their existence to the British. But for their protection Mahārājā Ranjīt Singh would have finished them off long before. The British Government had had a favourable attitude towards them ever since 1809.<sup>124</sup>

The British Government had no faith in the Sikhs. "They would perhaps be the one," said Dalhousie, "who would most readily think that a change be for their benefit."<sup>125</sup> They did not get slackened and never for a moment gave up the idea of having tight military grip on the Punjāb; for nobody could say when an emergency might break out and the British hold over the Punjāb gone. A big force comprising 60,000 soldiers<sup>126</sup> and 15,000 police<sup>127</sup> was stationed in the Punjāb. This meant that the Punjāb was preserved at the point of bayonet,<sup>128</sup> there being one soldier for every forty persons.<sup>129</sup>

In his administration reports, John Lawrence has tried to conceal these bare facts. He said at one place that his "efficient administration" was responsible for laying the "sedition and turbulence asleep" in the Punjāb.<sup>130</sup> At another place he said: "The majority [of Sikh soldiers] have turned to agriculture in their native Mānjhā and Mālwā... the staunch foot-soldier has become the steady cultivator and the brave officer is now the steady village elder."<sup>131</sup> He further said: "In no part of India has more complete peace reigned than in the Punjāb."<sup>132</sup>

John Lawrence is contradicted by Dalhousie thus: "In the region between the Rāvī and the Beās or the Sutlej... the character of the population generally is far too warlike, especially after the addition of the large bodies of discharged or fugitive soldiers."<sup>133</sup> Hollowness of John Lawrence's statements is also exposed by the fact that to exercise control over the "hostile people" the Commander-in-Chief was asked to deploy a large number of the armed forces in the stand-to position in the Punjāb. General Napier, the then Commander-in-Chief, admitted

this fact thus : "I have placed troops all round the Mānjhā : troops at Nūrpur, Kāngrā, Hājipur, Mukerīān, Badāpind, Hoshiārpur, Kartārpur, Jullundur, Ludhiānā, Ferozepore, Lāhore, Govindgarh and at Siālkot. Thus the Mānjhā is in centre of a girdle of troops which can in a few hours and the most distant in two marches be poured in rapidly from Jullundur and Lāhore under two of our ablest general officers, Sir W. Gilbert and Brigadier Wheeler."<sup>134</sup> Thus was peace in the Punjāb preserved at the point of British bayonets.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Foreign Secret Consultation*, No. 21, April 28, 1849. The following members of the Regency accepted and signed the submission on the part of the minor Mahārājā Duleep Singh : Rājā Tej Singh, Rājā Dīnā Nāth, Bhāi Nidhān Singh, Faqīr Nūruddīn, Sardār Gandā Singh, Agent of Sardār Sher Singh, and Sardār Lāl Singh, Agent of Sardār Attar Singh.
2. Baird, *Private Letters of Lord Dalhousie*, p. 61.
3. *Foreign Secret Consultation*, No. 73, April 28, 1849.
4. *Calcuttā Review*, 1854, vol. XXII, pp. 13-14 ; Temple, *Lord Lawrence*, pp. 47-49.
5. Arnold, *The Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration of British India*, vol. I, p. 230.
6. Latif, *History of the Punjāb*, p. 574.
7. *Foreign Secret Consultation*, No. 73, April 28, 1849.
8. *Governor-General's letter to the Court of Directors, Foreign Political*, No. 56, August 22, 1851.
9. For details, see *Foreign Secret Consultation*, No. 73, April 28, 1849; *Calcuttā Review*, 1853, vol. XXI, pp. 230-31.
10. *Foreign Secret Consultation*, No. 73, April 28, 1849.
11. It is interesting to note that most of these promises were empty and the Government never cared to fulfil them. *Calcuttā Review*, 1856, vol. XXVI, p. 467, puts it thus : "The promises were given, the services were rendered on faith of these promises and now when payment is demanded, it is refused almost with decision." The same was the case with promotion. The same journal says : "It is impossible to wonder that no civilian who leaves the Punjāb comes back to it."
12. *Calcuttā Review*, 1856, vol. XXVI, p. 467.
13. *Ibid.* It was popularly believed in those days that "a man takes strength of three mortal men by the mere fact of crossing the Sutlej."

14. *Government Records*, VIII-II, p. 328 ; *Punjab Administration Report*, 1851, 53, pp. 41-2.
15. Writing to the Court of Directors, Dalhousie observed : "I am fairly convinced that the safety of our own state requires us to enforce subjection of the Sikh nation. And the effectual subjection of that nation involves in itself the deposition of their prince." Arnold, I, p. 205.
16. There are different views about the date of Duleep Singh's birth. Gandā Singh (*The First Sikh War 1845-46*, p. 43) gives October 6-7, 1838 ; Smyth (*A History of the Reigning Family of Lāhore*, p. 96) gives February, 1837 ; Griffin (*The Rājās of the Punjab*, p. 7) also gives February, 1837, on the testimony of Smyth ; Dr H. R. Guptā, after a careful examination of all these dates in his book, *Punjab on the Eve of First Sikh War*, XXIX, gives September 4, 1837, as the correct date.
17. *Foreign Secret Consultation*, No. 21, April 28, 1849.
18. *Ibid.* Article Fifth said : "He shall continue to receive during his life such portion of the above-named pension as may be allotted to him personally, provided he shall remain obedient to the British Government."
19. *Governor-General's Secret Despatch to the Court of Directors*, No. 20, April 7, 1849, para 139.
20. *Sir John Login and Duleep Singh*, pp. 157-8 ; Letter, dated Lāhore, April 29, 1849.
21. These historical weapons of Gurū Gobind Singh were returned by Lady Lindsay in December, 1966, to the Indian High Commission in England. Soon after they were sent to India and are now preserved at Ānandpur Sāhib.
22. Latif, *op. cit.*, p. 573.
23. *Foreign Secret Consultation*, No. 21, April 28, 1849.
24. *Journal of Indian History*, vol. XLII, p. 700.
25. *Home Miscellaneous Broughton Papers*, vol. 756-57, vide *Journal of Indian History*, vol. XLII, p. 704.
26. *Court Minutes of the East India Company*, Wednesday, the 3rd July, 1850 and Wednesday, the 17th July, 1850.
27. Duleep Singh was the first of his rank in Asia to have become a Christian. Robert Clark, *The Missions in the Punjab and Sindh*, p. 295.
28. Mahārājā Duleep Singh became an English country gentleman and owned an estate in Suffolk. He married an Egyptian Christian lady. He came to India in 1860 ; but he was not allowed to visit Punjab. On his return to England, he became quite unhappy. He had a desire to settle in Delhī ; but Government did not permit him to do so, and wanted him to reside at Ootacamund. He agreed to it and sailed for India in 1886. But he was arrested and detained at Aden. At Aden, he renounced Christianity and again became a Sikh. He also repudiated the treaty of annexation that he had been forced to sign when a minor. He toured European countries and showed resentment against the British treatment. He died in Paris on October 23, 1893. He had six children—three sons and three daughters.
29. Dalhousie to Brigadier Mountain, January 31, 1849, vide Gandā Singh, *Private Correspondence Relating to the Anglo-Sikh Wars*, p. 167.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 116; *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 77-78, 112-119, October 7, 1848.
31. *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 79-84, 88-91, October 7, 1848; Indian Despatch to Secret Committee, No. 56, of 1848.
32. *Ibid.*, Nos. 166-68, January 30, 1848, October 7, 1848; 108-45, May 26, 1849.
33. *Ibid.*, Nos. 108-45, May 26, 1849.
34. *Loc. cit.*
35. For details see *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 256-58, December 30, 1848; *Foreign Consultation*, No. 51, March 31, 1849; *Foreign Secret Consultations* Nos. 112-19, October 7, 1848; Governor-General's Despatch to the Secret Committee, No. 72 of 1849.
36. *Foreign Secret Consultations*, No. 144, May 26, 1849.
37. *Ibid.*, Nos. 41-42, October 25, 1850; No. 7, September 9, 1857; Nos. 9-11, September 27, 1850; No. 139, June 25, 1852.
38. *Ibid.*, No. 16, September 27, 1850.
39. *Ibid.*, Nos. 124-47, June 17, 1859.
40. Kaye, *History of the Sepoy War in India*, vol I, p. 48.
41. Robert Napier, a high British official in Punjab, had suggested the necessity of such a measure as early as October 3, 1848. Writing to Frederick Currie he said: "I think we ought, if we take the Punjab, to reduce entire aristocracy. The people without heads are nothing." Gandā Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 163.
42. Hunter, *The Marquess of Dalhousie*, p. 99.
43. *Loc. cit.*
44. *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 68-71, May 26, 1849.
45. *Ibid.*, Nos. 41-42, October 25, 1850.
46. *Ibid.*, Nos. 68-71, May 26, 1849.
47. *Loc. cit.*
48. *Calcuttā Review*, 1853, vol. XXI, pp. 269-70.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 272.
50. *Foreign Consultations*, Nos. 140-44, December 29, 1852; Innes, *Sir Henry Lawrence the Pacifical*, p. 144.
51. Innes, *op. cit.*, p. 140.
52. Romesh Dutt, *Economic History of India*, p. 86.
53. *Loc. cit.*
54. Henry Lawrence to James Hogg, March 6, 1853, quoted by Thompson and Garrett, *The Rise and Fulfilment of the British Rule in India*, p. 389.
55. Innes, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
56. *Foreign Political Consultations*, No. 124, February 4, 1853.
57. Cited by Edwardes and Merivale, *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, pp. 483-84.
58. *Calcuttā Review*, 1853, vol. XXI, p. 280.
59. *Foreign Political Consultations*, No. 124, February 4, 1853.
60. Lee Warner, *Dalhousie's Administration*, I, p. 262; *Calcuttā Review*, 1856, vol. XXVII, p. 107.
61. *Calcuttā Review*, 1856, vol. XXVII, p. 107.
62. *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 1-4, October 29, 1858.
63. *Loc. cit.*
64. *Calcuttā Review*, 1856, vol. XXVII, p. 107.



65. *Loc. cit.*
66. *Loc. cit.*
67. *Loc. cit.*
68. *Loc. cit.* The failure has been reported in the following manner by a high military officer : "Fortunately, the measure failed or the Sikh Panchāyat system would probably have been introduced into the British ranks."
69. *Loc. cit.*
70. *Loc. cit.*
71. A reviewer of the *Calcuttā Review*, 1853, vol. XXI, pp. 236-7, observed that this Homeric line befitted the Punjābīs most.
72. The general proclamation of disarming of the people was approved by the Governor-General on May 10, 1849. *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 65-67, May 26, 1849.
73. *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 55-66, May 26, 1849.
74. *Loc. cit.*
75. The varieties of arms collected in Punjāb were all kinds of swords, matchlocks, pistols and suits of chain-armour, carbines and a kind of blunderbuss called *Sherbachā*, guns, cannons, balls and bullets, three or four kinds of daggers, two or three types of spears, quoits, bows and arrows. See *Calcuttā Review* 1853, vol. XXI, pp. 236-7 ; Arnold, *op. cit.*, I, p. 244.
76. Lee Warner, I, p. 262 ; Arnold, *op. cit.*, I, p. 244 ; *Governor-General's Letter to the Court of Directors, Foreign Political*, No. 29, May 18, 1849.
77. Douie, *The Punjāb Settlement Manual*, p. 24; Baden-Powell, *The Land Systems of British India*, II, p. 543 ; *Foreign Consultations*, Nos. 140-43, December 29, 1852.
78. *Foreign Consultations*, Nos. 140-44, December 29, 1852 ; Douie, p. 22.
79. *Loc. cit.*
80. Regular settlements were carried out piecemeal. Kāngrā was settled in 1850, for 30 years; some parts of Ambālā were settled in 1852 and the others in 1855. Settlement of the rest of the districts of cis-Sutlej and trans-Sutlej divisions was made in 1855. See Baden-Powell, *op. cit.*, II, p. 543, and *Settlement Reports* of different districts.
81. *Selections from the Records of the Government of India*, No. XVII, pp. 27-8.
82. Baden-Powell, *op. cit.*, I, p. 262.
83. Irfān Habīb, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, p. 264.
84. *Loc. cit.*
85. *Ibid.*, pp. 264-65.
86. *Loc. cit.*
87. Moreland (*The Agrarian System of Muslim India*, p. 147) admits that in his book *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, chapter VII, section 5, he could not appreciate the difference between *jamā* and *hāsīl*.
88. Baden-Powell, *op. cit.*, I, p. 289, fn. 2.
89. *Loc. cit.*
90. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 28-29.
91. Arnold, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 301-2.
92. *Selections from the Records of the Government of India*, No. XVIII, p. 25.

93. *Selections from the Records of the Government of India*, No. XVIII, pp. 27-8.
94. John Lawrence does not mention England where a large amount of Punjāb money was remitted regularly by about 11,000 English soldiers and civilians serving in the territory.
95. *Selections from the Records of the Government of India*, No. XXIII, *Administration of the Punjāb*, 1854-56, p. 28.
96. *Selections from the Records of the Government of India*, No. XVIII, p. 28.
97. *Loc. cit.*
98. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, p. 322; Archer, *The Sikhs*, p. 290; Thorburn, *The Mussalmans and the Moneylender in Punjāb*, pp. 49-51.
99. Thorburn, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
100. Thorburn, *op. cit.* I; Darling, *The Punjāb Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, p. 170.
101. Archer, *op. cit.*, p. 290; Darling, *op. cit.*, p. 173.
102. Quoted by Karl Marx in *The New York Daily Tribune*.
103. *Parliamentary Papers*, House of Commons, No. 117, May 29, 1857.
104. Quoted by Karl Marx in *The New York Daily Tribune*, September 17, 1857; Marx and Engles, pp. 79-80.
105. Romesh Dutt, *op. cit.*, II, p. 89.
106. *Loc. cit.*
107. *Loc. cit.*
108. *Loc. cit.*
109. *Selections from the Records of the Government of India*, No. XVIII, pp. 27-28.
110. The attack may not be a direct one, but indirectly it was there. It is admitted by Clark, Secretary to the Christian Missionary Society for Punjāb, thus : "That time was one when there were many great Christian heroes in the Punjāb. Sir Henry Lawrence was then at the head of Board of Administration. His letter of welcome to the missionaries and subscription of Rs. 500 a year to the mission showed the importance that he attached to the work which they were commencing."
111. Archer, *op. cit.*, p. 261.
112. *Loc. cit.*
113. *Loc. cit.*
114. It was quite in keeping with the policy of the missionaries that had set out to convert the entire Sikh population. Compare it with the following lines of the valedictory instructions given to some Christian missionaries appointed to the Punjāb Committee on June 20, 1851 : "A few hopeful instances lead us to believe that the Sikhs may prove more accessible to scriptural truths than the Hindūs and Muhammadans, if a few leading minds be won to Christ." Clark, p. 205.
115. Archer, *op. cit.*, p. 266
116. An anonymous writer, presumably some high British official, wrote in the *Calcuttā Review* in September, 1859 (p. 17) : "Leave it [Golden Temple] to itself and withdraw from it the patronage of the State : resume the lands set aside for it...and the splendour of the institution will pass away. The gilded dome will lose its lustre, the marble walls fall out of its repair ... To act thus would be to act impartially and in accordance with true principle of non-interference."

117. *Calcuttā Review*, 1856, vol. XXVII, p. 107.
118. *Calcuttā Review*, 1853, vol. XXI, p. 280.
119. *Selections from the Records of the Government of India*, Foreign Department, No. VI, *General Report on the Administration of the Punjāb Territories*, 1852-53, p. 498.
120. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
121. Strong preventive and defensive measures stood in their way.
122. For antithesis to the propaganda of John Lawrence, see Innes, 118-19; Gibbons, *The Lawrences of the Punjāb*, pp. 304-5.
123. It must be remembered that the majority of the population in their states was non-Sikh.
124. Gordon, *The Sikhs*, pp. 21-36; Archer, *op. cit.*, p. 270.
125. *Governor-General's letter to the Court of Directors, Foreign Political*, No. 29, May 18, 1849.
126. *Punjāb Government Records*, VIII-II, p. 328.
127. Gibbons, *op. cit.*, p. 165.
128. General Napier explained it very beautifully. He gave three principles of a good rule : "justice, rupees and bayonets." But Dalhousie adhered to a typical principle : "Rupees were taken out of nation's pocket, while the bayonet and the firebrand were freely applied." Napier, *Defects Civil and Military of the Indian Government*, p. 76.
129. This ratio has been given as 1 : 200 in the *Calcuttā Review*, 1856, vol. XXVI, p. 184. But there only regular army personnel are put in the computation and the police force is omitted. The ratio in the rest of Bengāl Presidency, four times the area of the Punjāb, was only 1 : 3000. Explaining why a larger army of 72,000 men was required in Punjāb, Napier observed : "The Punjāb was sadly governed. There was no reason for advising retention of so great an army...There was nothing safe in Punjāb and the Army of Occupation could not safely be reduced...Punjāb could not be insurgent, while 72,000 men were in occupation" *ibid.*, p. 44.
130. *Punjāb Administration Report*, 1849-51, p. 59.
131. *Selections from the Records of the Government of India*, Foreign Department No. VI, p. 213.
132. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
133. Napier, *Defects Civil and Military of the Indian Government*, p. 404.
134. *Ibid.*, p. 406.

# QUANTIFICATION IN PUNJĀB SOCIAL AND POLITICAL HISTORY : SOURCES AND PROBLEMS

N. GERALD BARRIER

New research methodology and increasing availability of source material have generated interest in quantification by South Asianists. A survey among groups and individuals in North America, for example, indicates that over two hundred projects either involve collection or use of blocks of data. Similarly, the Indian Social Science Research Council plans to create a network of data centres with information on the social sciences.<sup>1</sup>

This essay presents notes and comments relating to quantification and Punjāb history. Its premise is that considerable attention must be devoted to assessing source materials available on the region before Punjāb studies can benefit from these potentially fruitful developments. The initial sections introduce specific sources of quantifiable data from the British period — organizational publications, newspapers, and government proceedings (imperial, provincial, police). Focus on the categories reflects my own background and specialized knowledge. A range of equally important sources has been omitted, partially because of space and partially because they require detailed examination by specialists more conversant with their content.<sup>2</sup> Rather than claim to exhaust the subject, the essay surveys sets of material and suggests their possible value and limitations for quantified research. A concluding section describes new projects relating to the collection and preparation of quantifiable information. Hopefully this working paper will stimulate discussion and re-examination of resource frequently neglected by students of British Punjāb.

## ORGANIZATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Organizations reflecting the segmentation of Punjāb society and religion dotted the Punjāb at the end of the nineteenth century. Districts often had a dozen cultural/religious organizations—branches of the Ārya Samāj, Sanātan Dharma, Singh Sabhā, Muslim Anjumans, caste associations, district associations, and social reform/literary societies. These

generated another assortment of organizations in the next century, including Hindū Sabhās, the Sikh Educational Conference and the Chief Khālsā Dīwān (followed by the Akālī Dal), Shuddhī Sabhās, and political parties active in local, provincial or national arenas (such as the Unionists, Congress, Muslim League, and revolutionary bands).

These associations reflected two trends. First, each in part was a response to the growing complexity of life occasioned by the introduction of Western rule. Education, new forms of employment and crisis of identity intensified or gave fresh direction to old patterns. Whatever the stimuli, the associations evolved a routinized style and mode of organization to deal with life around them. Secondly, each tended to produce reports or descriptions of its activities on a systematic basis.

Two networks of organizations were particularly diligent in publishing and preserving organizational literature. Professor Kenneth Jones of Kansas State University has uncovered caches of Ārya Samāj reports on institutions such as DAV College, Samāj branches, and all-Punjab governing bodies. Sikh reports on Singh Sabhās, hospitals, orphanages, schools, and missionary activities are preserved at Punjābī University at Patialā and at the Sikh Kanyā Mahāvīdyālā, Ferozepur.<sup>3</sup> In addition, both the Ārya Samāj and Singh Sabhās prepared directories. Two such compilations on the Sikhs contain background information on over eighty Sabhās, with details on residence, occupation, and education of members.<sup>4</sup>

Literary, caste and general reform societies published similar literature. Arorās, Khatris, Sūds, Jatts and Rāmgarhiās had their own reports and journals, as did an elitist reform society, the Punjāb Association. The monthly reports of the Anjuman-i Punjāb, an organization prominent in the 1860's and 1870's, contain a very rich collection of data on membership, issues, and funding networks.<sup>5</sup>

Other relevant organizational material includes publications of the Muslim League and Congress and smaller-scale "pan-India" organizations such as the Central National Muhammadan Association. The Association published annual and triennial reports, one of which contains the names, residence, and occupation of Punjāb members.<sup>6</sup> Annual delegate lists for Muslim League and Congress meetings were printed on a regular basis. Frequently included is information on education, occupation and caste.<sup>7</sup> Similar data can be abstracted from proceedings of the Muhammadan Educational Conference, the Sikh Educational Conference and the endless flow of literature from the Chief Khālsā Dīwān.

Organizational publications tell us much about the nature of voluntary associations in Punjāb. Reports frequently give membership lists and background on leaders, funds, issues and projects, affiliations, and internal operations. Although the quantity and content of such reports varied with time and the individual organization, they remain an important block of source material which probably will contribute to an assessment of patterns among specific organizations, within a community, or a network of allied subjects. If the material is utilized, its considerable size seems to necessitate some form of quantification. For example, by 1900 there were a hundred Singh Sabhās in Punjāb, with an equally large number of affiliated institutions. Reasonable control over membership files, funding methods, and missionary activities would be difficult if not impossible without breaking the data out of reports and placing it on cards.

The reports also permit collection of biographical information which would generate new or reinforce existing biographical data banks. Careful cumulation of data on the shifting careers of individuals should permit evaluation of what was happening within organizations or sections of Punjāb society. To understand a prominent Sikh leader, Sundar Singh Majithiā, for example, information could be gathered from annual reports of the Chief Khālsā Dīwān, the Khālsā College, the Sikh Educational Conference, the Amritsar and Lāhore Singh Sabhās, and the Khālsā Tract Society as well as from his private papers, Dīwān records, and newspapers.

What are some problems in utilizing these reports as sources of data? First, it is difficult to piece together a series of publications on or by one organization. For example, except for the Ferozepur and Lāhore branches, other Singh Sabhā reports appear for a few years, disappear, and then perhaps reappear.<sup>8</sup> Because annual reports and organizational material were exempt from registration under the Indian Press Act of 1867, no substantial record exists for assessing whether a given society published reports on a systematic basis. Muslim material appears to be particularly erratic, perhaps because of the relative lack of research on Punjāb Muslims. Certainly Muslims kept records, as indicated by private collections and the existence of Anjuman records in Lāhore.

Even when a run of reports becomes available, the internal arrangement of reports varies widely. Membership lists may be included one year, in the next omitted, but then fund information might appear. This relates to another problem, assessing what has been left out or the accuracy of information. Details on a faction may be excluded, or the recording of

delegates erratic for a specific year.<sup>9</sup> Although difficulties are not insurmountable, they do force researchers to find supplementary material such as newspapers and personal accounts to fill in the gaps.

Language provides a final check to use of reports. Most nineteenth century organizational matter is in highly stylized Urdū (with Persian or Sanskrit influence). Research on subsequent developments may entail reading Punjābī, Urdū and Hindī. Language and area programmes alleviate some of the difficulty in handling this literature, but for the near future, much work on reports probably must be carried out by specialists from Punjāb or West Pākistān.

### NEWSPAPERS

Two factors contribute to the value of newspapers as major data sources on Punjāb : the rapid growth of Punjāb journalism (from 24 papers in 1880 to 620 in 1932) and a tendency for newspapers to be owned by one organization or to represent a particular viewpoint. The increase of papers insures an expanding universe of information, while at the same time producing much information on specific aspects of Punjāb life.<sup>10</sup>

Newspaper accounts contain reports on meetings and conferences (dates, membership, attendance) useful for quantification. Coverage tends to be focussed, often omitting references to opponents or at least giving a coloured view of their activities. Obituaries and biographical sketches also can be integrated into files on individuals.

Other uses of newspapers will depend on questions and research design. Because journals usually were concerned with a programme or issue, a specialist studying a problem often can locate a file of newspapers relating to his area of interest. "Neo-Hindū" and Tat Khālsā factions among Singh Sabhās in the 1890's, for example, are comparable on the basis of letters and reports in the *Khālsā Akhbār* and the *Shuddhī Pattar*. The *Shuddhī Pattar* also provides background on all Sikh "reconversions" or purification ceremonies over a three-year period (including detailed biographical data on participants). Moreover, papers frequently include donation lists and notes on subscribers. Donation lists for the DAV College or Lekh Rām Memorial funds, for example, could be helpful guides to who supported the Ārya Samāj and to what degree.

Leaving aside the perennial language difficulty (most press items prior to 1905 are in Urdū), locating significant files of old papers remains a

formidable hurdle. The seriousness of the problem diminishes as one moves closer to contemporary Punjāb, but many earlier papers seem to have been lost or destroyed. Perhaps the situation is not as grim as it appeared some five years ago. The constant appearance of virtually complete sets of newspapers suggests that we may yet discover and preserve depositories scattered throughout the Punjāb and West Pākistān. Already available are runs of the *Tribune*, the *Inquilāb*, the *Zamīndār*, and the *Civil and Military Gazette* plus an assortment of Sikh newspapers.<sup>11</sup>

### BRITISH RECORDS

British government in India rested largely on its ability to communicate. At the top of the political system, the British had to maintain a flow of information, commands and reports both within the bureaucracy and also between rulers and ruled. Feedback, whether from district officials or Indians, became a vital component of decision-making. The British devised many structures, and devices to deal with problems of communication. The resulting literature helps supplement the organizational reports and newspapers as a major source on Punjāb.

Keeping informed about developments within the bureaucracy meant maintaining a record system. Records served as references to issues and decisions which could affect future action. Some records were printed and widely circulated as, for example, the civil lists and the "history of the services." Both serve as collections of biographical data on Punjābīs (e.g., the history series contains information such as caste, religion, education and career pattern).

Another set of printed records involved British efforts to gain a supervisory overview of Punjāb publications. From 1867 until 1947, the Government prepared quarterly lists of books and tracts published in Punjāb and submitted to the registrar of books as a requirement under the 1867 Press Act. These lists, which permitted substantial surveillance of the literary outflow of the province, include data such as title and author, printer, and publisher, number of copies printed, price, and occasional summaries of content.<sup>12</sup>

A third category of material is in "secret" or "for official use only" publications. Prepared for internal circulation within the bureaucracy, these items cover numerous areas. The annual reports and statements on the punjāb press, prepared by the Special Branch of the Punjāb Police



Department, are significant. The reports discuss editors, publishers, printers, the tone of the paper and the political/criminal career of journalists associated with its operation.<sup>13</sup> In other cases, specific needs generated memoranda. Handbooks of biographical data on "landed gentlemen of the Punjāb" were circulated among district officers, for example, as were "Politico-Criminal Who's Who" and confidential reports on prominent Punjāb Kūkās. Similar guides to Akālī leadership and revolutionaries also flowed freely within the bureaucracy.

Unpublished departmental proceedings contain a range of data, the value of which varies with official concern at any point of time and the queries of scholars. If one wishes to examine religious endowments, for example, the Foreign Department records of the Indian government, c. 1840-1865 (National Archives of India, New Delhī) survey the history and internal management of most of the gurdwārās, shrines and land grant-supported institutions active during the reign of Ranjīt Singh. Because the British had to preserve detailed information on land records and grants, the proceedings of the Board of Revenue in Lāhore are filled with notes and reports. The history of important families and *jāgīrs* can be examined through use of these sources, although a more effective approach probably would be to work with village or district records.

Religious and political developments led to closer official scrutiny of Punjābīs from the 1880's onward.<sup>14</sup> The resulting richness of confidential files is illustrated by a burst of British concern over cow protection in the Punjāb, 1881-1894. Approximately fifty files, both in the Imperial Records (NAI) and Punjāb Records (West Pākistān Record Office, Anārkalī's Tomb, Lāhore, and India Office Library, London) contain background on organizations and individuals prominent in the *gaurakshinī* sabhās.<sup>15</sup> Home-Political proceedings of the Indian Government abound with C. I. D. history sheets and discussion of developments such as the "Bhārat Mātā Gang" (Ajīt Singh and associates), the Hindū Mahāsabhā, Ahmadiyā outbreaks, and the Muslim League. Similarly, weekly C. I. D. reports on Punjāb politics (1907-1945) provide scholars with another type of data on politicians, religious leaders, and institutions. A final example of runs of material available in records involves British concern with elections. The Reforms Office files (NAI) contain biographical sketches of all Punjāb legislative members. In addition, the files often describe individual contests and evaluate factions and the political process.<sup>16</sup>

Locating and then learning to handle records is not without difficulty.

The major unpublished collections of provincial records, in Lāhore, remain basically inaccessible. The Punjāb Home-Political files have never been declassified, a pattern likely to continue in the near future. A second collection on nineteenth century Punjāb, at the Record Office in Patiālā, includes valuable material on a few districts, but in no sense duplicates the mass of data at Lāhore. Neither has usable printed guides. Punjāb proceedings also are integrated into the departmental records of the Government of India (NAI). These generally are "open" (including Home-Political) prior to 1946. Existing printed indexes are useful, although it sometimes takes a major effort to figure out where files might be located and what they might be called for purposes of indexing.<sup>17</sup> In addition to printed proceedings duplicating the departmental records at the NAI, the India Office Records contain other material such as reports on Punjāb revolutionaries/politicians residing outside India (Judicial and Public Department proceedings) which have dossiers and relevant information. The India Office also has a printed copy of Punjāb non-confidential proceedings.

The major question remains : Can colonial records be used to study indigenous problems ? If a scholar evaluates the proceedings as documents, and if he tries to avoid being caught in the British view of Indian society, he should be able to utilize the records. The value of official documents and their potential use necessarily must vary with the topic and the approach of individual scholars. To focus entirely on proceedings and not use newspapers, tracts and organizational material of course would be misleading (although it has been done on too many occasions). Similarly, study of the British sources presupposes familiarity with problems and the accumulating of data from other sources which provide the researcher with a backdrop against which the records can be evaluated.

#### PUNJĀB DATA BANKS

At least two efforts at collecting substantial quantifiable material on Punjāb political and religious developments currently are underway. Historians at Punjābī University, Patiālā, have assembled and published an extensive who's who of Punjāb freedom fighters. Although comparable information does not exist for the thousands of individuals described in the publication, the first and hopefully successor volumes should provide a much-needed sketch of career and political patterns.<sup>18</sup> At the

University of Missouri, Columbia, an attempt has been made not only to collect but to put into accessible form several sets of data which might be useful for Punjāb studies. Attempts to form a Punjāb data bank at UMC illustrate the difficulties of handling official and local documents.

The Missouri project originated in discussion of Punjāb political culture. Professor Paul Wallace had collected biographical information on Punjāb politicians, circa 1920-1964 (drawn from records, published sources, and interviews), and I had a similar collection based on press reports, newspaper clippings, and proceedings of the Indian National Congress.<sup>19</sup> The individuals covered by the two studies number well over 5,000, a total not easily hand-counted. By stages, therefore, we have begun to transfer the data to code sheets and IBM cards.

The initial deck of cards contain backgrounds on Punjāb participants in annual sessions of Congress, 1885-1916. In addition, background in Punjāb journalists, 1870-1947, individuals reviewed in British police documents (such as the 1913 C. I. D. Who's Who), and politicians involved in the 1907 Punjāb disturbances (information extracted from records and local newspapers) gradually will be integrated. We anticipate having data on approximately 2,500 Punjābīs transferred to tapes and code sheets.

The next phase will involve integrating Wallace's material on Punjāb politicians, and biographical information on approximately 1,000 Sikh leaders prior to 1921 (drawn from newspaper accounts, organizational proceedings, and directories). Eventually, we anticipate adding similar data on Ārya Samājists, Muslim politicians, M. L. A.'s (1907-1965), and other categories of data which Punjāb colleagues judge both desirable and available.

Punjāb names have created a major problem in preparing code sheets. Delegates to the Congress, for example, sometimes spelt their names one way in 1893 and another in 1900. Use of honorifics and varied spellings of common words such as "Mohammad" also raised questions about whether there were one or two persons. For example, at least three Lājpat Rāis appear in Punjāb public meetings, two Lāl Chands, and so on.<sup>20</sup> Internal evidence often permits an unsorting, but the premonition remains that, in some cases, mistakes are quite possible (particularly with reference to journalists who moved around frequently).

Finding series of reports so as to insure a universe of material also has created obstacles. All Congress attendance lists, 1885-1916 (with the

exception of 1907). were located. Because of the split at that time, the organization published its annual report late and did not include delegates' names. Newspaper accounts of proceedings and the Punjāb role in the meetings made possible a partial reconstruction of the local contingent but, again, a measure of uncertainty exists. We unfortunately cannot rely on the lists of delegates elected to attend a session because all nominees did not make the trip.<sup>21</sup>

A complete run of the British confidential press reports also is not available. Approximately 20 annual reports are missing in the period 1880-1945. Although the gaps are disconcerting, material on specific years can be evaluated, and trends noted.<sup>22</sup>

If names are sorted, and complete sets of information were available, the problem of internal accuracy still would remain. Registration of Congress delegates was a notoriously loose operation. Registrars requested categories of information (name, degrees, occupation, religion, where and when elected) but some of this often tended to be omitted or additional categories (such as caste) included. Religious differentiation always proved to be a stumbling block. One delegate, for example, lists himself as an Ārya Samājist, a Hindū the next year, and a Hindū-Ārya or Theist the following year. Notation of caste also seems to have shifted (one of the most common trends being Arorās, Khatrīs and Sūds signing as "Kshatriya"). Although delegates generally noted their hometown, in cases of omission, details on elections cannot be taken as evidence of domicile because often one organization such as the Lāhore Indian Association elected delegates for the entire province.

Similarly, British reports may or may not be accurate. The possibility for injecting bias into a background note on a newspaper or journalist were legion. Often evaluations changed with circumstance and the background of the reviewer (usually a Punjābī, not a British officer). Actual registration data such as name, caste, and circulation seem to have been less susceptible to interpretation except that most information tended to be supplied by journalists themselves as required under the 1867 Press Act. Editors sometimes produced random figures for "average circulation," and in the case of highly controversial newspapers, even false names of individuals legally responsible for their publication.

Evaluation of reports and lists therefore becomes critical if mistakes are to be corrected or inconsistencies questioned. Many such problems in the sets of data have been isolated, but where information seemed suspicious or could not be untangled, "unknown" categories have been

employed. A similar study, by Ellen McDonald and Craig Stark, supplemented data by using interviews and oral history for the validation of information. As yet, this has not been possible with the Missouri data bank.<sup>23</sup> Careful collection of evidence from *The Tribune*, the *Khālsā Advocate*, and other readily accessible newspapers may be another fruitful remedy for inconclusive information.

The assembling of data and analysis of statistics from the Punjāb material at Missouri remain at a nascent stage, but it is hoped that such experiments may help pave the way for other ventures in the U. S. and Punjāb. One element certainly is clear. Whatever the difficulties in abstracting data, eventually statistics and correlations have to be viewed within the context of developments at a given point of time. Quantified research ultimately becomes meaningless without accurate reconstruction of that context.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Discussed in ICSSR, *Annual Report, 1969-70* (New Delhi : I. C. S. S. R., 1971). The University of California, Berkeley, and the South Asia Regional Council have been involved in the survey of data holdings in North America.
2. Sections of unpublished records have not been treated—school records, proceedings of colleges and universities, district and village records. Tom Kessinger of the University of Pennsylvania has been utilizing village materials in his forthcoming book on social and economic change in Punjāb (University of California Press, 1974). Also, official serials, censuses, gazetteers, and series such as the publications of the Board of Economic Inquiry have yet to be studied to any degree and particularly evaluated as sources for quantifiable data.
3. Analytic survey of this material can be found in bibliographic essay of Kenneth Jones and Eric Gustafson, *Explorations in Punjāb Bibliography* (Delhi : Manohar, 1974).
4. Discussed in N. G. Barrier, *The Sikhs and Their Literature* (Delhi : Manohar, 1970).
5. Reports are available from 1865-1873 (Urdū), supplemented by notes in *The Civil and Military Gazette* and other contemporary newspapers. A full discussion of the Anjuman is in Jeffrey Perrill, *The Anjuman-i-Punjāb* (unpub. diss.; History, University of Missouri, 1974).
6. *Triennial Report of the Central National Muhammadan Association, 1885-1887* (Calcuttā : Central National Muhammadan Association, 1887).
7. Congress reports available in the India Office Library and the Nehrū Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi. Annual Muslim League reports are being re-

published systematically by the National Publishing House in Karāchi.

8. Background in Barrier, *The Sikhs*.
9. One can read Singh Sabhā reports, for example, which ignore factional conflict or omit details on segments of their operations. Similarly, newspapers tended to have a very constricted view of what was happening.
10. Discussed in Paul Wallace and N.G. Barrier, *The Punjab Press, 1880-1905* (Michigan State University, Asian Studies Center, South Asia Series, Occasional Paper 14), pp. 2-3, tables at the end of the volume.
11. Runs of *The Tribune* (film) are at the Center For Research Libraries, Chicago, the Nehrū Museum and Library, and the University of Missouri, Columbia; the *Inquilāb* and the *Zamīndār* at the Institute of Historical Research, Panjāb University, Lāhore; Sikh papers discussed and union-listed in Barrier, *The Sikhs*.
12. Background on the reports in Barrier, "South Asia in Vernacular Publications," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, XXXVIII (Aug. 1969), 803-810.
13. These are used as sources, and discussed in Wallace and Barrier, *The Punjab Press*.
14. Home-Political files (National Archives of India) contain a variety of such C. I. D. reports.
15. One file, for instance, examines the membership of every voluntary association in a district town.
16. Reports available on film, University of Missouri.
17. A useful guide to the handling of files and proceedings is in *Imperial Record Office Staff Manual* (Calcuttā : Government of India, 1923).
18. Faujā Singh, *Who's Who, Punjab Freedom Fighters*, vol. I (Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1972). This volume contains background on over 3,000 persons and also has a historical introduction.
19. Initial use of the statistical material is found in the following : N. G. Barrier, *The Punjab Disturbances of 1907* (unpub. diss., History, Duke University, 1966); Paul Wallace, *The Political Party System of Punjab State (India) : A Study of Factionalism* (unpub. diss., Political Science, University of California, Berkeley, 1966).
20. For an informative survey of problems of dealing with Punjāb names, see R. C. Temple, *Dissertation on the Proper Names of Punjābīs* (Bombay : 1883).
21. The pre-Congress public meetings tended to be gala events in which individuals with little interest in or commitment to the Congress received nomination as delegates.
22. The only other possible location for missing reports would be the records of the Special Branch, West Pākistān Police, or in the Home (Confidential) files of the Punjāb (Lāhore), neither of which is available to scholars.
23. Ellen E. McDonald and Craig M. Stark, *English Education, Nationalist Politics and Elite Groups in Mahārāshtra, 1885-1915* (Berkeley : University of California, Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies, Occasional Papers series, 5, 1969). It should be noted that the interview technique was used to supplement background on 1,278 Fergusson College registrants, 1885-1895, many of whom were later prominent in the region.

## CUNNINGHAM'S ATTEMPT TO GET HIMSELF REHABILITATED IN THE POLITICAL SERVICE

S. S. BAL

On March 19, 1849, was published, in England, Joseph Davey Cunningham's famous book *A History of the Sikhs*.<sup>1</sup> It earned its author a permanent place in the British historical writing on the Sikhs,<sup>2</sup> though it caused immense damage to his illustrious career in the Political Service. For writing the book he was dismissed from the service that he had adorned with distinction for more than twelve years :<sup>3</sup> this also brought him the displeasure of the Court of Directors. It also earned him the Court of Directors' "unqualified condemnation of the spirit which pervades the work," and the observation "that it contains statements and inferences affecting the reputation and the honour of the Government and the army, which are wholly unfounded and such as no British officer should have presumed to put forth."<sup>4</sup>

The real cause of Cunningham's disgrace was the pressure brought on Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control, by the previous Governor-General of India, Lord Hardinge.<sup>5</sup> No sooner had Lord Hardinge seen the book than he contacted the President<sup>6</sup> and pressed him to take some action against Joseph Davey Cunningham. In his meeting with Hobhouse on April 27, 1849,<sup>7</sup> he insisted on it with such anger that Hobhouse was forced to contact the office of the Court of Directors to find some excuse for doing that.<sup>8</sup>

The excuse found was the use of official documents without permission. In a Secret Despatch, dated May 5, 1849, Hobhouse wrote to Dalhousie in his official capacity to enquire from Cunningham whether he could produce any authority permitting him to publish to the world documents entrusted to his custody as an officer deemed worthy of implicit confidence, and if Cunningham were not to return an answer to that enquiry within a very limited time or if his answer were to fail to satisfy him he "will without further reference to us and at the earliest possible moment remove him from the Political Service."<sup>9</sup> In a private letter, dated May 7, 1849, Hobhouse informed Dalhousie that "I have sent you, besides the Secret Letters on general subject, a separate letter

in regard to Mr [Captain] Cunningham's publication. I trust you will not hesitate a moment what to do if his answer should be unsatisfactory. No time should be lost in making an example which may deter your functionaries from abusing these trusts as this person appears to have done."<sup>10</sup>

Lord Dalhousie acted on the orders as indeed he was bound to do, and enquired from Cunningham of his authority in using the unpublished documents known to him only in his official capacity.<sup>11</sup> The reply that Cunningham gave to his enquiry<sup>12</sup> forced him to dismiss the latter from the Political Service as desired in the despatch of May 5, 1849, from the President.<sup>13</sup> The reply of Cunningham, in light of Hobhouse's enquiry could not but look stupid to him.<sup>14</sup> Cunningham completely misunderstood the reason of Dalhousie making the enquiry. Under the impression that Dalhousie was making the enquiry because he had not sought any permission from the Government of India, he wrote back that he had certainly used documents in the *History of the Sikhs* not accessible to the public but that was after "sanction has been obtained" from the Court of Directors.<sup>15</sup> In proof of his contention he enclosed a copy of the letter that he had written to the Secretary of the Court of Directors on April 25,<sup>16</sup> and the reply received by his brother from the Deputy Secretary, dated July 13, 1848.<sup>17</sup> His letter to the Secretary ran as follows :

During such hours of my leisure as I could with propriety obtain from my official duties, I have latterly occupied myself with the composition of a *History of the Sikhs*. I should not perhaps have been disposed to undertake a work of this kind, and I certainly could not have executed the concluding portion of it if I had not for some years held political office on the North West Frontier. My labours I therefore consider to be the property of the Govt. I serve but I now address you in the hope that the Court of Directors may be pleased to sanction regular publication of a History which their Servant need not have written but yet has exerted myself to write. The work will form two volumes (as originally intended) and it will bring down the narrative of Sikhs' affairs to the termination of the campaign of 1845-46. The first volume alone is now sent and it will be laid before you by my brother Mr Peter Cunningham with whom I have left the regulation of all details connected with its publication after sanction has been obtained. The volume in question concerns the early history alone of the Sikhs and it may there-



fore perhaps be allowed to be put in printer's hands without delay.

The text of the Second Volume is written and it is hoped that it may follow in a month. It necessarily treats of subjects about which different opinions may be held; but I nevertheless hope that it may not be deemed necessary to suppress or modify any passage of the last chapters. I have not knowingly at least given a false colouring to affairs, neither have I anywhere cast reflections, nor am I aware that any can in truth be cast on the political integrity of the general Govt. or on the personal honour of particular delegates. The British Govt. of India has long been one eminently just and considerate towards both its immediate subjects and dependents."<sup>18</sup>

The reply to this application which Joseph's brother had received in London was to the following effect :

I have laid before the Court of Directors of the East India Company your letter of the 13th ultimo, transmitting a letter from Capt. J. D. Cunningham requesting the sanction of the Court to the publication of a *History of the Sikhs* prepared by him, the first volume of which you have forwarded in manuscript.

I am commanded to inform you in reply that the publication of the work in question must rest on the discretion of the author but the Court can be no parties to it, and that the author will remain as entirely responsible for the opinion and statements contained in it as if he had not made the Court any communication on the subject.<sup>19</sup>

If the letter of the Deputy Secretary to the Court of Directors is carefully read, it becomes clear that the permission to the publication of the book was distinctly given though with the proviso that Court could be no parties to it but not the permission to use unpublished documents. That was obviously because in spite of Cunningham's application containing reference to his having access to such documents, he had not categorically asked for such a permission. It was, of course, implied in the application when it was read together with the Preface,<sup>20</sup> but was not noted by the Court. Possibly that was because in the four chapters sent with the application,<sup>21</sup> no use had been made of the secret unpublished documents.<sup>22</sup> If the rest of the five chapters of the book had reached the Court, as originally intended, the Court would have been forced to examine the use of those documents and categorically state whether Cunningham could be allowed to publish the book in which he

had used the documents.

One cannot, therefore, blame Dalhousie if on receiving the reply of J.D. Cunningham to his enquiry, he should have, as directed by the President of the Board of Control, immediately ordered the removal of Cunningham from the Political Service.<sup>23</sup> In a minute drawn on the subject on July 4, 1849, he observed :

...it is unquestionable that Captain Cunningham has published the substance of papers confidentially entrusted to him, that he had neither the permission of the Govt. of India nor the sanction of the Court of the Directors for so doing and consequently that he has been guilty, to use his own words, of the 'impropriety—indeed dishonesty of using official documents' which the Secret Committee observes were 'entrusted to his custody as an officer worthy of implicit confidence.'<sup>24</sup>

While ordering the removal of Joseph Davey Cunningham from the Political Service, Dalhousie did two significant things. He put in the gazette announcing the dismissal of Cunningham that this was because of the unauthorized use that Cunningham had made of official documents entrusted to his charge in his *History of the Sikhs* though it was not usual to insert the reasons for doing so in such cases.<sup>25</sup> He had, of course, done that to prevent people from saying that Cunningham had been dismissed for saying unpalatable things about the Government and the British,<sup>26</sup> but it was a source of immense mortification to Cunningham.<sup>27</sup> The second thing that Dalhousie did was to ask his Secretary to send a copy of the Secret Committee despatch in which the Directors had demanded his removal from the Political Service.<sup>28</sup> That was to give a hint to Cunningham that even the Court of Directors felt that they had never permitted Cunningham to use unpublished documents in his book.

The second thing done by Dalhousie resulted in Cunningham writing to Dalhousie on July 25, about the necessity of his representing to the Court of Directors.<sup>29</sup> That was because he had noticed from the copy of the despatch of the Court of Directors that the Court did not appear to have made any reference to his brother in London "although previously in communication with him on the publication of the *History*."<sup>30</sup> He argued that "a consideration of my original application and a reference to my brother would I think have placed me in a less reprehensible light and as the Court is ever willing to judge its servants with leniency, I cannot but deplore the omission of what would I trust

have somewhat extenuated my offence."<sup>31</sup> To satisfy that need Cunningham penned a long Memorial to the Court on August 30.<sup>32</sup> In it he stated "his services for the information of Your Hon'ble Court and of explaining the misapprehension under which he laboured with regard to sanction having been obtained for the publication of the book in question, or for the use of documents in its composition."<sup>33</sup>

He argued that this was because of the nature of the reply that had been sent to his application by the Deputy Secretary of the Court of Directors.<sup>34</sup> In the application that he had addressed to the Secretary of the Court of Directors, he had stated that he could not have written the latter part of the History if he had not held political employment on the frontier and, in the proposed Preface to the book that he had sent with the application, he had also stated that he had enjoyed free access to public records.<sup>35</sup> His application had further stated that the History would be brought down to the termination of the Campaign of 1845-46, and he had mentioned his hope that it might not be thought necessary to suppress or alter any passage although different opinions might be held about events so recent.<sup>36</sup>

It was in reply to this application that the Deputy Secretary of the Court of Directors had informed Peter Cunningham in a letter, dated August 17, 1848, that to print it would rest with the discretion of the author, that the Court of Directors could not be parties to the work and that Joseph would remain responsible for opinions and statements equally as if he had not made the Court any communication on the subject.<sup>37</sup>

Joseph's friends in England were in every way pleased with this answer. They considered it to mean that the book was not to have an official character or looked upon as declaratory of the views of the Government about Sikh affairs.<sup>38</sup> They did not feel that in giving this answer the Court of Directors had any objection to Cunningham using secret documents. On the other hand, they had interpreted the answer to mean that the Court of Directors had allowed the author to make use of documents in the composition of the History but on his own responsibility as to the truthfulness of his deductions and the propriety of his language.<sup>39</sup> Joseph was always willing to hold himself responsible for what he might aver, and he was simply anxious to obtain the sanction of the Court of Directors to the use of unprinted papers and of such unrecorded information as he had derived from his position.<sup>40</sup>

Cunningham emphasized that so strongly was he impressed with the

obligations of his official character that in his letter to the Secretary of the Court he had said that he considered his labours to be the property of the Government he served and therefore sought permission to publish the History he had written.<sup>41</sup> It never occurred to him or to his friends that the Court objected to the use of unprinted documents or unrecorded official information in the composition of the book<sup>42</sup> and indeed so ample a sanction was Dickinson's letter held to convey that it was deemed wholly superfluous to submit for the perusal of the Court the second portion of the History which reached England soon after the date of reply of Dickinson's letter to Peter Cunningham.<sup>43</sup> It was thought that, had the Court been unwilling to allow the discretionary use of documents in narrating recent transaction, no reply would have been given about the publication of the book until the concluding chapters had been seen, or that Joseph would have been reminded of the orders in force against making known the content of official papers.<sup>44</sup>

Cunningham concluded his Memorial with the request that any error he may have committed, and any inadvertence of which he may have been guilty, would be favourably considered by the Court.<sup>45</sup> He had no desire to offend against the rules of the Government he served.<sup>46</sup> He had received from the Government much consideration and he had hoped to get more.<sup>47</sup> He still trusted "that his obvious desire to obtain sanction for the publication of the narrative he had written and his sincere regret that he should have drawn hasty conclusions may plead for him, and induce the Court of Directors to authorize his reappointment to the Political Agency from which he had been removed, and for fulfilling the duties of which he has devoted all the energies of his mind and body with little regard to his personal interest."<sup>48</sup>

Cunningham pleaded that he was keen on reappointment because at the moment he appeared before the public in a position painfully humiliating to one possessed of honourable feelings and belonging to an honourable service.<sup>49</sup> He appeared as one who, from unworthy motives of gain or vanity, deliberately committed a breach of trust.<sup>50</sup> His character both as a man of honour and as a faithful servant stood compromised with society and had been commented upon by friends and by public writers.<sup>51</sup> Joseph indeed felt conscious that in his mind he had made no secret or surreptitious use of papers confided to his charge, howsoever greatly he might have erred in supposing his employment of them to be warranted by Court's reply to his application, and so solicited the Court to restore him to political employment.<sup>52</sup> He trusted that the blot upon

his name would be removed.<sup>53</sup>

This Memorial greatly impressed Dalhousie. In all probability he felt convinced that it had not been proper to remove Joseph Davey Cunningham from the Political Service. That is clear from the fact that he gladly forwarded this Memorial to the Court of Directors,<sup>54</sup> in spite of the fact that it had come to him when the press was saying that "nominally Capt. C. is dismissed for using official papers without leave in his book but really because his book says disagreeable things of his Govt."<sup>55</sup> and further that "at all events this is clear : all Capt. C. has said we now know is based on authentic public papers, therefore it must all be true."<sup>56</sup> He was doing that further when the newspapers openly based themselves both on the proved fact in the book as on the opinions and assertions contained in it.<sup>57</sup> It was at a moment when Dalhousie was hard put to prevent a public debate on points raised in the *History of the Sikhs*. Sir Henry Lawrence had written to him complaining that Cunningham's book not only contained misrepresentation of the acts of Government but slander of himself as of others,<sup>58</sup> and had sought permission to write against these in public but Dalhousie had written : "I do not agree to his commenting in the newspapers what would become a controversial correspondence."<sup>59</sup> Dalhousie had sent Cunningham's Memorial to the President of the Board of Control in spite of the fact that he must have known that the latter would not like it.

Perhaps Dalhousie's action in showing that promptitude was motivated by the desire that this Memorial be before the Court of Directors when it was to sit for a formal sanction of his removal of Cunningham from the Political Service. It did reach the Court of Directors a month before it sat down to approve the removal of Cunningham from the Political Service,<sup>60</sup> but it did not produce the desired effect. In its meeting held on November 7, 1849, the Court of Directors approved Cunningham's removal from the Political Service and directed that Cunningham be conveyed :

...the expression of our severe displeasure, both at the breach of official confidence of which he has been guilty and at the disingenuousness of his representation that the improper use which he had made of confidential document had received our sanction. . .

The Court further observed :

...We deem it necessary to express our unqualified condemnation of the spirit which pervades the work, and to add that it con-

tains statements and inferences affecting the reputation and the honour of the Government and the army, which are wholly unfounded and such as no British officer should have presumed to put forth.<sup>61</sup>

These remarks of the Court of Directors were conveyed to Cunningham in the Christmas week of 1849<sup>62</sup> and could have disheartened him to resign his commission in the army if Dalhousie had not mitigated the shock by directing him soon after to examine the irrigation cuts and dams of the Ghaggar and Sarasvatī.<sup>63</sup> To Cunningham this "appointment was interesting in its nature, and it was pleasing as an evidence of the consideration of the Governor-General."<sup>64</sup>

That was particularly so because it had come after a period of painful suspense that he had passed through since leaving Indore in September, 1849.<sup>65</sup> He had marched to Ludhiānā to join the Sappers, as ordered "notwithstanding the advice of the medical men who truly foresaw the effects a rainy season march would have upon a constitution impaired by years of indoor labour and out of door exposure."<sup>66</sup> When he had reached Ludhiānā, he had been told to go to Attock to command a company of Sappers.<sup>67</sup> Immediately he had started for the bank of the Indus, although so unwell as to be unable to ride.<sup>68</sup> It was, when he had reached Lāhore, that he had received instructions to return to Ambālā to examine the irrigation cuts and dams of the Ghaggar and Sarasvatī.<sup>69</sup> That was in the beginning of December, 1850.

A little before giving the Ghaggar and Sarasvatī assignment to Joseph, Dalhousie had even tried to rehabilitate him with the Court of Directors. That was while sending the report presented by the Resident of Bhopāl who had succeeded Cunningham. The following is what Dalhousie got conveyed to the Court of Directors on December 1, 1849 :

The Resident of Bhopāl submitted a report upon the present condition of the Bhopāl State under the Regency of Sekunder Begum. The Governor-General noticed with gratification the intelligence and judgement with which Sekunder Begum conducted the administration of the State and the success and prosperity which had attended her management. His Lordship expressed his satisfaction at the judicious assistance rendered by Capt. J. D. Cunningham in the furtherance of all measures tending to the improvement of the country.<sup>70</sup>

It was while Cunningham was thus busy on a new project and

enjoying the appreciative notices of Lord Dalhousie that he received the Court's displeasure of November 7, 1849. Perhaps believing that the new project gave him the opportunity once again to show his worth, he thought of losing himself in it and postponed making any further representation. It was not till the last week of July, 1850, that he was to learn that the Court had considered his explanatory Memorial and decided that "nothing was advanced" in it "to induce a change of opinion" that it had expressed in its despatch of November 19, 1849.<sup>71</sup>

Meanwhile, since February 7, 1850, after receiving detailed instructions from the Superintendent Engineer on what he was precisely to do about the new project,<sup>72</sup> Cunningham had devoted himself to his task completely in spite of failing health. He had engaged himself in that "work with alacrity."<sup>73</sup> He "measured and examined till I literally dropped, but still I persevered amid bodily suffering" till he "succeeded in accomplishing the duty entrusted to me."<sup>74</sup>

On July 25, 1850, Joseph Davey Cunningham submitted a long report of seventy paragraphs with five appendices and two maps to his superior which was immediately passed on to the Governor-General in Simlā.<sup>75</sup> Feeling confident of the approbation that his work was likely to win from the Governor-General, he thought that it was the right moment to attempt to reopen his case.

He went to Simlā and, after meeting the Secretary to the Governor-General and the Governor-General, he drafted a new representation couched in a language he had not used so far.<sup>76</sup> He now sought for the clemency of the Court and not its justice.<sup>77</sup> He admitted that the Court had not given him any permission to use the secret documents, but then it was not he as much as his brother who was responsible for publishing the book without getting a categorical sanction of the Court to the use of secret documents in the last chapters of his book.<sup>78</sup> He submitted that he had omitted a circumstance in his first explanation which he was putting forth now in the hope that it would tell to his advantage.<sup>79</sup> It was to the effect that his brother had not "abided by my original instructions; or attended to my subsequent caution."<sup>80</sup> If he had done so, "the latter half of the book would have been laid before the Court equally with the first as was contemplated in my letter requesting leave to publish it."<sup>81</sup> What Peter had done was that, on receiving the letter of Dickinson, dated August 17, 1848, he had, instead of sending the second volume to the Court which he had received by the end of August, written to his brother in India that to him Dickinson's letter meant

permission to publish the book and seemed perfectly all right. Joseph wrote to Peter that to him also Dickinson's letter seemed "a sufficient warrant" to publish the book, but he would nevertheless like Peter to submit the second portion of the manuscript to the Court. Peter reacted to this suggestion with a reply that, considering the tenor of Dickinson's letter, he thought it needless to do so. This decision of Peter reached Joseph in April, 1849, by which time the book had already been published.<sup>82</sup>

Cunningham referred to the order removing him from the Political Service stating his having made an unauthorized use of official documents, an expression from which many persons inferred that he had done so secretly and clandestinely.<sup>83</sup> His feeling of mortification at this construction had been deepened by the remarks of the Court of Directors to the effect that he had not only committed a breach of official confidence but had disingenuously declared that he had received the Court's sanction to make the improper use of documents in the *History of the Sikhs* written by him.<sup>84</sup>

Cunningham explained that he was fully aware now when he was writing the explanation, dated August 12, 1850, that the Court had conveyed no permission to him but when he had first said in reply to the query of the Governor-General that he had the permission to use secret documents he honestly believed he had received ample authority and my "exculpation from designedly doing what was wrong was made in equally good faith."<sup>85</sup> He naturally deprecated the severe accusation of disingenuousness.<sup>86</sup> However, he now admitted and regretted the defective judgement which had led him to misinterpret the Court's meaning and to presume a sanction when none was intended.<sup>87</sup>

How he now wished that the whole of the *History of the Sikhs* had been submitted, as originally designed by him.<sup>88</sup> Then "any obscurity of meaning would have been cleared"<sup>89</sup> and the Court of Directors would not have considered that his letter of application contained no request to use documents.<sup>90</sup> Even as it was, Cunningham submitted, "It does not seem to me that my letter in its wording conceals any purport, although I admit that the request might have been conveyed in terms still more clear."<sup>91</sup> He urged that he could have no other motive in addressing the Court on the subject than to obtain leave to use documents.<sup>92</sup> He could not expect that the Court would give the stamp of its authority to the book by an official approval of its contents.<sup>93</sup> He had hoped indeed that the Court might see something to commend in the industry



which it evinced or in the interest in the people of India which it indicated, but the language, the arrangement, the particular opinions, and the general arguments he had left to the judgement of the public or the remonstrances of individuals should any think themselves misrepresented.<sup>94</sup> "In these times," Cunningham insisted, "an English author would neither court a general censure, nor would an English Government become a general expurgator of the writings of individuals."<sup>95</sup> That being the case it was natural for him to construe the expression in Dickinson's letter—"the Court could not be parties to it"—to mean that the Court could not become patrons of the work, and not that he was prohibited from using documents.<sup>96</sup> It was similarly natural for him to interpret the caution about "responsibility for opinion and statements" to mean no more than that the Court would not stand between him and any persons who felt themselves aggrieved.<sup>97</sup> In writing to the Court, he was mainly desirous of using papers and was ready to stand the consequences of the particular use he might make of them.<sup>98</sup>

He now acknowledged that he was wrong and no such leave was given. But the above background of how he had felt when he had first received the letter of the Under-Secretary of the Court was given in detail to see the justification of his desire in making the new representation to "clear my character from the charge of disingenuousness and intentional or even contumacious disregard of orders."<sup>99</sup>

He submitted that the Court had been unfair to him when it considered that in his book he had made statements affecting the character of the Government and the enemy.<sup>100</sup> "This is a charge which to me is wholly unexpected for I neither thought nor think that any reflection can justifiably be cast on the honour of the Government or of its soldiers."<sup>101</sup> He, however, expressed his regret generally that any such opinion was formed.<sup>102</sup>

He reminded the Governor-General that being conscious of that fact that his last chapter might fail to satisfy all connected with the transactions narrated, he had in his application for permission to publish the book indicated his readiness to conclude the book at a period antecedent to the war should it contain anything in the eyes of the Court of Directors that was inopportune.<sup>103</sup> That was clear from the fact that in his application of April 25, 1849, he had stated :

The text of the 2nd volume is written, and is hoped that it may follow in a month. It necessarily treats of subjects about which different opinions might be held but I nevertheless hope it may not

be deemed necessary to suppress or modify any passage of the last chapter.<sup>104</sup>

Unfortunately, this chapter or the preceding chapters were not shown to the Court as he evidently had designed they should have been because his brother had not used an extent of discretion which the nature of the case and his instructions and caution warranted.<sup>105</sup> Being in active employ, Joseph Cunningham was obviously ready to attend to any objections the Court might have had to the narration of the recent events, to alter particular passages wherein he might have erred, or omit the concluding chapters should they be held generally objectionable as to time of appearance.<sup>106</sup> In another respect, Joseph had not attempted to publish the book until he had thought, erroneously indeed, that he had got leave to use documents, and so in it he had told what he consciously believed to be the truth.<sup>107</sup>

He had brought the History down to a date three years short of its publication, and within that period the arrangements concluded on the termination of the war had given way to another policy.<sup>108</sup> He had thus referred to bygone events, and had done so with the confidence and freedom which he considered an Englishman, although a soldier, might use in relating things no longer in act, and any opinions concerning which could neither advance nor prejudice the public service.<sup>109</sup> He even thought that having obtained leave to use papers he should remain responsible mainly to individuals and not to a Government constitutionally liable to have its proceedings variously regarded and criticized.<sup>110</sup> He had seen books published sometimes with applause and always with impunity about the most recent events by men whose knowledge was necessarily dependent on their position as servants of the State, and many of whom had greater or lesser degree of access to public papers.<sup>111</sup> A typical example was that of Prinsep's *Transactions in Central India in 1817-18*, in the Preface to which the author had said that as his official position of Secretary of Government gave the best means of information so he considered it a duty to the public to make the truth known.<sup>112</sup>

Cunningham felt hurt that the Court of Directors had in reply to his Memorial of August 30 of the previous year simply said that nothing was advanced in the Memorial to induce a change of opinion.<sup>113</sup> This had proved to him a double source of regret and disappointment, for he had hoped that his explanations would obtain some credit and that some consideration would be given to his services of seventeen years.<sup>114</sup> He had, however, to deplore that the charges of disingenuousness and of

a surreptitious use of papers remained unmodified, and that an active career in various capacities and in different parts of the country was held as nothing when compared with a mistaken interpretation or any error wholly unintentional.<sup>115</sup> He believed what he had done in his service of seventeen years to be of some credit to himself and of some advantage to Government.

He detailed the long and meritorious service that he had rendered to the East India Company and ended with the appeal that he now looked to the Government, not for justice because he admitted his fault but, for clemency and forgiveness. He ended with entreaty that his fault might be admitted to have been one of culpable misapprehension indeed, but still not of deliberate design, and that he may be "relieved of the stigma which attached to my name by a public notification, or by being nominated to some office which would mark to the community the restoration of the confidence of Government in my integrity."<sup>116</sup> He appended a long list of such offices as could be conferred on him.<sup>117</sup> The representation reached the Governor-General round about the same time as his report on the project he had been assigned to. The Governor-General wrote on August 19, 1850, a Minute on this representation. This Minute ran as follows :

I consider it an act of justice to any officer who has fallen under the displeasure of the Hon'ble Court of Directors to transmit to them any statement which he may urge in his defence, provided that it be conveyed in respectful and fitting terms.

The letter which I have just received from Captain Cunningham is of this nature, and I beg that it may be forwarded to the Court.

Captain Cunningham admits his fault; and appealing not for justice but clemency and forgiveness sets forth the various circumstances which may be considered by the Hon'ble Court as extenuating his offence and justifying indulgent consideration.

I am bound to say that the spirit in which Captain Cunningham has submitted himself to the orders of the Court has been irreproachable.<sup>118</sup>

Dalhousie very much regretted that the "present orders of the Court precluded my restoring him [Cunningham] to Political Office."<sup>119</sup> He did, however, show his appreciation of the work done by Cunningham on Ghaggar and Sarasvatī. On August 28, 1850, he expressed "the high satisfaction" with which he had received the report submitted by

Cunningham on his work on Ghaggar and Sarasvatī and tendered "his best thanks for this report."<sup>120</sup> His Secretary reflected the mood of the Governor-General when in his note he wrote :

The report is a very interesting one, and I would recommend that it should be immediately printed in the same form as other Canal and Civil reports of the Delhi territory.<sup>121</sup>

The Governor-General further ordered that Cunningham might continue his enquiry into the irrigation of Ghaggar, Sarasvatī and other cis-Sutlej streams during the ensuing cold season.<sup>122</sup>

Cunningham took to this work with his usual thoroughness, though his health had broken down completely. Perhaps what kept him going was the hope that his latest Memorandum would evoke a favourable response from the Court of Directors. He continued that work throughout the cold wintry days of 1850-51 in that hope. His hope was to prove futile.

In a letter, dated December 4, 1850, the Court of Directors referred to the letter written by Cunningham "in apology for, and extenuation of, the conduct which has excited our disapprobation, and requesting that 'he may be relieved of the stigma which at present attached to his name' by a public notification or by being nominated to some office which will mark to the community the restoration of the confidence of Government in 'his integrity'" and observed :

It appears sufficient for us on this occasion to say that we see no reason to depart from the opinion which we have already expressed; and that Capt. Cunningham will establish a better claim to consideration by endeavouring hereafter to deserve the favourable opinion of his superiors by the faithful discharge of his duty than by repeated attempts to obtain a reversal of their judgement on his past conduct.<sup>123</sup>

This was conveyed to Cunningham sometime in January, 1851. It broke his "heart and he died suddenly near Umbāllā on February 28, before attaining his fortieth year."<sup>124</sup>

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. J. D. Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs* (1915 reprint), Professor Garrett's note.

2. No sooner the book appeared, *The Athenaeum*, writing on the book and its author, admired the 'scrupulous care of a man' and his exact knowledge. A few days later *The Times* appreciated the 'Fulness of detail' in the *History of the Sikhs* as well as the comprehensive knowledge its author possessed. *The Calcuttā Review*, otherwise critical of the book, admired the author's researches in the book. In 1883, Malleeson described Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs* as "a very remarkable one" which was "extremely well-written, giving fullest and most accurate details of events." In 1886 *Dictionary of National Biography* characterized it as one of the most valuable books ever published in connection with Indian history." In 1915 Garrett wrote: "The whole book bears evidence of most meticulous care, and the voluminous footnotes show the breadth and variety of the author's study." Recently, in 1958, P. Spear remarked: "J. D. Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs* remains the best descriptive work on the Sikhs up to 1846." *The Athenaeum*, March 24, 1849 (No. 1117), p. 293; *The Times*, April, 1849, p. 7; *The Calcuttā Review*, vol. XI, No. XXXI, pp. 523-24; G. B. Malleeson, *The Decisive Battles of India* (London, 1883), pp. XIX, 315; *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. XIII, Garrett's Introduction to Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs* (1915 reprint); P. Spear, *The Oxford History of India*, part III (re-written in 1958), p. 619.
3. Cunningham had joined the Political Service in 1837 and was removed from the service in 1849.
4. Secret Committee, Court of Directors, to Governor-General, May, 1849. *Political Letters to India* (1849), p. 511.
5. For details, see S. S. Bal, "Joseph Davey Cunningham's Dismissal from Political Service" in *Essays on History, Literature, Art and Culture* (New Delhi, 1970), pp. 120-38.
6. Hardinge to Hobhouse, April 26, 1846. *Home Miscellaneous Papers* (India Office Library) to be hereafter referred to as HMP, 846, p. 112.
7. Hardinge to Hobhouse, April 27, 1846. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
8. Hobhouse to Hardinge, April 26, 1846. HMP, 847, p. 60.
9. Secret Committee to Governor-General, May 5, 1849. Board's Drafts of Secret Letters to India (1849) in India Office Library, London, No 1371.
10. Hobhouse to Dalhousie, May 7, 1849. HMP, 859, p. 160.
11. Secretary to Governor-General to J. D. Cunningham, June 12, 1849. *India Secret Consultations* (in India Office Library, London) to be hereafter referred to as ISC.
12. J. D. Cunningham to Secretary to Governor-General, June 21, 1849. ISC, 20.9. 1849, No. 2.
13. Referred to in fn. 7 above.
14. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, July 30, 1849, *British Museum Additional Manuscripts* (to be hereafter referred to as B. M. Add. MSS.) 36476, p. 36; Dalhousie to Hobhouse, September 6, 1849. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
15. J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, June 21, 1849, ISC, 29-9-1849, No. 2.
16. J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, Court of Directors, April 25, 1848. *Ibid.*, No. 12.
17. Deputy Secretary, Court of Directors, to Peter Cunningham, August 17, 1848. *Ibid.*, No. 13.

18. J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, Court of Directors, April 25, 1848. *Ibid.*, No. 12.
19. Deputy Secretary, Court of Directors, to Peter Cunningham, August 17, 1848. *Ibid.*, No. 13.
20. The proposed Preface was sent to the Court of Directors with the application to publish the book. This Preface was subsequently published to the first edition with only one paragraph dropped.
21. That only four chapters were sent is not clear from the application but finds a mention in J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, Government, June 21, 1849. ISC, 29-9-1849, No. 2.
22. See footnotes to the first four chapters of the book.
23. Minute, dated July 4, 1849, by the Governor-General. ISC, 29-9-1849, No. 5.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Dalhousie to Hobhouse, September 6, 1849. B. M. Add. MSS. 36476, p. 74.
26. *Ibid.*
27. J. D. Cunningham's Memorial to Court of Directors, dated August 30, 1849, No. 12.
28. Dalhousie Minute, dated July, 1849, No. 5; Secretary, Government, to J. D. Cunningham, July 11, 1849, ISC, 29-9-1849, No. 6.
29. J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, Government of India, July 25, 1849. ISC, 29-9-1849, No. 9.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*, para 6.
32. J. D. Cunningham's Memorial to Court of Directors, dated August 30, 1849, No. 12.
33. *Ibid.*, para 1.
34. *Ibid.*, para 19.
35. *Ibid.*, para 7.
36. *Loc. cit.*
37. J. D. Dickinson to Peter Cunningham, August 17, 1848. ISC, 29-9-1849, No. 13.
38. Joseph Davey Cunningham's Memorial to Court of Directors, dated August 30, 1849, para 9.
39. *Loc. cit.*
40. *Loc. cit.*
41. *Loc. cit.*
42. *Loc. cit.*
43. *Loc. cit.*
44. *Loc. cit.*
45. *Ibid.*, para 11.
46. *Loc. cit.*
47. *Loc. cit.*
48. *Loc. cit.*
49. *Ibid.*, para 12.
50. *Loc. cit.*
51. *Loc. cit.*
52. *Loc. cit.*
53. *Loc. cit.*

54. Secretary, Government of India, to J.D. Cunningham, September 18, 1849. ISC, 29-9-1849, No. 14.
55. Quoted in Dalhousie to Hobhouse, September 6, 1849. HMP, 859, p. 73.
56. *Loc. cit.*
57. *Loc. cit.*
58. *Loc. cit.*
59. *Loc. cit.*
60. Reached the Court of Directors in the first week of October, 1850. On October 8, the Board of Control informed the Government of India that Cunningham's Memorial would be laid before the Court of Directors. B. D. of S. L. to India (1850).
61. *Political Letters to India* (1849), p. 511.
62. Secretary to J. D. Cunningham, December 24, 1850.
63. This seems to have been early in December, 1850 though, J. D. Cunningham received instructions regarding the examination of the Dams of Ghaggar and Sarasvatī on February 7. J. D. Cunningham to I. T. Boileau, Superintendent Engineer, 25-7-1850. IPC, 13-9-1850, No, 199.
64. J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, Government of India, August 12, 1850, para 10. IPC, 6-9-1850, No. 209.
65. *Loc. cit.*
66. *Loc. cit.*
67. *Loc. cit.*
68. *Loc. cit.*
69. *Loc. cit.*
70. Governór-General to Court of Directors, December 1, 1849. *Political Letters from India*, 1849, p. 651.
71. J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, Government of India, August 12, 1850, para 1. IPC, 6-9-1850, No. 209.
72. See fn. 63 above.
73. J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, Government of India, August 12, 1850, para 10. IPC, 6-9-1850, No. 209.
74. *Loc. cit.*
75. This was on July 30, Secretary, Government of India to I. T. Boileau, Superintendent Engineer, N. W. Provinces, 28-8-1850, para 10. IPC, 13-9-1850, No. 206.
76. J. D. Cunningham's Letter to Secretary, Government of India, dated August 12, 1850, was despatched from Simlā. See address, J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, Government of India, August 12, 1850. IPC, 6-9-1850, No. 209.
77. J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, Government of India, August 12, 1850. *Ibid.*, para 10; Governor-General to Court of Directors, August 31, 1850, para 2. Board's Collections, 126896, p. 1.
78. J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, Government of India, August 12, 1850, para 2 & 3. IPC, 6-9-1850, No. 209.
79. *Ibid.*, para 3.
80. *Loc. cit.*
81. *Loc. cit.*

82. *Ibid.*, marginal note to para 3.
83. *Ibid.*, para 4.
84. *Loc. cit.*
85. *Loc. cit.*
86. *Loc. cit.*
87. *Loc. cit.*
88. *Ibid.*, para 5.
89. *Loc. cit.*
90. *Loc. cit.*
91. *Loc. cit.*
92. *Loc. cit.*
93. *Loc. cit.*
94. *Loc. cit.*
95. *Loc. cit.*
96. *Loc. cit.*
97. *Loc. cit.*
98. *Loc. cit.*
99. *Loc. cit.*
100. *Ibid.*, para 6.
101. *Loc. cit.*
102. *Loc. cit.*
103. *Loc. cit.*
104. J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, Court of Directors, April 25, 1848. ISC, 29-9-1849, No. 12.
105. J. D. Cunningham to Secretary, Government of India, August 2, 1850, para 6. IPC, 6-9-1850, No. 209.
106. *Loc. cit.*
107. *Loc. cit.*
108. *Loc. cit.*
109. *Loc. cit.*
110. *Loc. cit.*
111. *Loc. cit.*
112. *Loc. cit.*
113. *Ibid.*, para 7.
114. *Loc. cit.*
115. *Loc. cit.*
116. *Ibid.*, para 11.
117. Memorandum regarding appointments. Appendix to J. D. Cunningham's letter to Secretary, Government of India, dated August 12, 1850. B. C. 126896, pp. 26-27.
118. Minute by the most noble the G. G. of India, dated August 19, 1850. IPC, 6-9-1850, sent as a letter to the Court of Directors on August 31, 1850. B. C. 126896, p. 1.
119. Secretary, Government of India, to J. D. Cunningham, 28-8-1850. IPC, 6-9-1850.
120. Secretary, Government of India, to J. D. Cunningham, 28-8-1850. IPC,



13-9-1850, No. 203.

121. Note by Sir H. M. Elliot. IPC, 13-9-1850, No. 203.
122. Secretary, Government of India, to J. D. Cunningham 28-8-1850.
123. Court of Directors to Governor-General in Council, December 4, 1850. *Political Letters to India* (1850), p. 597.
124. *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1886), vol. XIII, p. 316.

THE BENGĀLĪ ELITE IN POST-ANNEXATION PUNJĀB :  
AN EXAMPLE OF INTER-REGIONAL INFLUENCE IN  
NINETEENTH-CENTURY INDIA

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On March 29, 1849, the British Government of India announced the annexation of the Sikh kingdom of the Punjāb, finishing the process of expansion that had witnessed the gradual absorption of India into the British Rāj. The creation of a new administrative system, its success in maintaining peace throughout the annexed territories during the Mutiny, and the rapid development of the 'model' province during the last half of the nineteenth century are known in outline to every student of Indian history. The social changes that accompanied this administrative process are less well known. Examination of social changes in India has focused on a national regional scale either concerned primarily with the creation of new class and occupational groupings or the alteration of traditional patterns of social and economic hierarchy. The movement of Indians from one region to another is still a largely unexplored process, a process that invites, if not necessitates, more than one analytical approach. Total emigration to or migration from a given region and within a specific period of time are both possible definitions of future studies as well as the emigration, in whole or in part, from a particular region to all other regions. Various levels of analysis must be undertaken, in addition to the basic compilation of relevant data, before an overall picture of intra-regional movement can be established throughout the subcontinent for any given period. This study employs a limited scope to describe not only the process of inter-regional movement but some of its accompanying results in the social, ideological, and political fields, with the focus on a single group : the educated, westernized Bengālīs who travelled to one area, the Punjāb.

Not only was the British 'Punjāb' different in size than it had been previously, it soon became different in kind. The British themselves comprised a new ruling elite below which was another equally new stratum of society, Indian but non-Punjābī. The establishment of British

rule and its administrative structure necessitated a large number of clerks, teachers, pleaders, and doctors—the human underpinnings of the Rāj. Such men were not available within the Punjāb and so were recruited from the older British-controlled territories of Bengāl and the North-Western Provinces. British officers assigned to the Punjāb brought with them their staffs of clerks and subordinate officials, while missionaries encouraged Bengālī converts to move to the north-west and to accept positions in newly opened Christian institutions. The opportunities available in the Punjāb and the success of their compatriots drew educated Bengālīs to the Punjāb in an increasing stream. Kāyasthas from the United Provinces, Brāhmanas, Baidyas, and Kāyasthas from Bengāl soon created a new social grouping between the British, and the vast number of Punjābīs who as yet had no English-educated, westernized elite of their own. This new level of ‘foreign experts’ did not arrive in the Punjāb as an undifferentiated mass but brought with them the division, prejudices, and hierarchical attitudes that were in existence within Bengāl. As is often the case among emigrants, these differences were somewhat muted by their relative isolation from the indigenous population, and by the incomplete recreation of their home communities’ social structure.

One of the earliest identifiable segments of the Bengālī community to appear in the north-west were the Christian converts who went there to accept positions in newly opened missionary institutions. While the English administrators from the Gangetic Plain brought their Indian subordinates, so did the missionaries. Bengālī converts educated in English, found in the Punjāb career opportunities in much the same spheres as did their Hindū compatriots in government service. They became administrators and educators. Many of the missionary-sponsored schools and colleges were headed by Bengālīs, and Bengālīs were prominent in the offices of missionary organizations. The career patterns of the first two Bengālī Christians to travel to the Punjāb were typical. Pandit Golaknāth Chatterjī, the first Brāhman convert of the American Presbyterian Church in India, headed the Jullundur mission,<sup>1</sup> while Rādhā Raman began his career as a teacher in one of the mission schools and was later placed in charge of the Religious Books and Tracts Society of Lāhore.<sup>2</sup> Both men had been influenced by the famous missionary Alexander Duff and considered themselves to be his disciples. From this small beginning a compact community of Bengālī Christians came into existence. Ties of marriage, culture, and, to some degree, of caste were typical of this community. One of the most influential of the

Bengālī Christians, Kālī Charan Chatterjee, travelled to the Punjāb in 1861. He had been invited and urged to come by Golaknāth Chatterjī who offered him the headmastership of the Jullundur Mission School. Kālī Charan moved to the Punjāb in the same year and in 1862 married Golaknāth's daughter, adding the bond of matrimony to two men already tied by caste and conversion. Kālī Charan and his wife dedicated their lives to mission service in the Punjāb. He studied for the ministry, was ordained in 1868, and then moved to Hoshiārpur to head the local mission, where he remained until his retirement in 1915. As Kālī Charan devoted his life to spreading the Christian faith, he was ably assisted by his wife and daughters. They opened day-schools for both Muslim and Hindū girls, in addition to an orphanage and boarding school.<sup>3</sup> This pattern of family participation was not unusual and in many instances these Bengālī families went on to become permanent additions to the Punjābī scene. Kālī Charan's son is just such an example : he became a mathematics professor at the Government College, Lāhore, and for many years served as a director of the Forman Christian College.<sup>4</sup>

The Bengālī Christians in the Punjāb found themselves separated from the surrounding population by their regional identity and religion. Marriages presented a major social problem. Recourse to other Bengālī converts in Bengāl was possible, but, in several instances, we have records of local marriages within the small Christian community of the Punjāb. The marriage between Golaknāth's daughter and Kālī Charan is one such example, a Bengālī Brāhman Christian, both were Rādhyā Brāhman, marrying another Bengālī Brāhman convert. A similar case is evident from the marriage of Rām Chandra Bannerjee to the daughter of a Brāhman Christian living in Gujranwālā.<sup>5</sup> Other converts married into the Christian community of Calcuttā.<sup>6</sup> The Bengālī Christians in the Punjāb were a small, tightly knit community, an extension of the larger convert community of Bengāl and the Gangetic Plain. They were a subsection of the larger Bengālī community of the Punjāb, tied in various degrees of intimacy with both reformed and orthodox Bengālīs, with reformed and educated Punjābīs, and with their missionary-associates in the European community. Both the tightly knit nature of this social segment and its occupational tendencies can be illustrated from one set of relationship. Miss Monā Bose, head of the Government Girls College of Lāhore, and her sister, Mrs Dutt, were well-known members of the Bengālī Christian community. Mrs Dutt's son, Dr S. E.

Dutt, became a leading figure in the Indian Y. M. C. A., while an assistant of Miss Bose's at the Government College married Dr Rudra, a Bengālī and head of St. Stephen's College, Delhī. This type of inter-mixing of marriage, blood, and associational ties was not unusual among Bengālī converts, nor were the occupational choices, government service and missionary activities.<sup>7</sup>

The largest, most influential and publicly active section of the Bengālī community were the Brahmos, members of the reformed Hindū sect, the Brahma Samāj, organized in Calcuttā in 1828. While undoubtedly many Brahmos entered the Punjāb during the 1850's and early 1860's, the Lāhore Brahma Samāj was not founded until 1863. The Lāhore Samāj was established by a small group of Bengālīs—half a dozen or so—and an even smaller number of Punjābī Hindūs.<sup>8</sup> With the opening of this organization a new era of reform began in the Punjāb. While the Punjāb was the home of various reform movements and Protestant-like sects, the Brahma Samāj was the first such organization that could be linked directly to the clash of Indian and British cultures. The Lāhore Samāj founded branches in Rāwalpindī (1867), Amritsar (1873), and Multān (1875),<sup>9</sup> and in later years at Ropar, in Ambālā District, at Derā Ghāzī Khān and Simlā.<sup>10</sup> During the 1870's, the Brahma Samājes of the Punjāb strove to create programmes modelled after the parent body, the Bengālī Brahma Samāj. Mandirs were erected, schools founded, and weekly meetings for worship instituted.<sup>11</sup> The Brahma Samāj also employed a congregational form of religious organization in its Indianized pattern, while the Christian missions utilized this pattern in its purely western form. Both were imported and available for later Punjābī adaptation. Not only did the Brahma Samāj introduce similar methods of action as those used by the Christian missionaries, they also faced similar problems. They too were a mission movement in a strange land. They too found it necessary to publicize their ideas and to bridge the barrier of language. Bengālī was as little understood in the Punjāb as was English. In answer to this need the Brahma Samāj had established by 1876 a society for the translation and publication of Brahma literature, a society that eventually produced religious and social tracts in Punjābī, Hindī and Urdū. By 1877, the Lāhore Brahma Samāj possessed one of the few Brahma printing presses outside of Bengāl. In addition, they began to publish a monthly journal, *Hari Hakikat*, which, by 1877, had a circulation of 200. As was typical of such periodicals, this Brahma journal had a chequered career, now appearing under one name

and now under another ; however, it continued to be published usually in two editions, one in Urdū and the other in Hindī.<sup>12</sup> Innovative leadership in journalism, in literature, and in social and religious reform marked the early years of the Punjāb Brahmō Samāj and of the wider Bengālī community.

Although several Samājes had been founded and new ones opened from time to time, only two remained vigorous throughout the later nineteenth century : the parent Samāj at Lāhore and the Samāj in Simlā.<sup>13</sup> The Lāhore Brahmō Samāj had the advantage of a concentration of Bengālīs in the Lāhore area. The most prominent member of this group was Bābū Novīn Chandra Rāi who moved to the Punjāb in 1869 to accept the joint positions of Vice-Principal of the Oriental College and Registrar of the Panjāb University.<sup>14</sup> Novīn Chandra quickly became the leading member of the Lāhore Brahmō Samāj, and the Bengālī community of Lāhore, and one of the most important figures in the new educated elite of the Punjāb. He was an articulate writer and an eloquent public speaker, remaining active in the public life of the province for over thirty years, and was an example of the type of individual who made the Bengālī community in the Punjāb influential far beyond its numerical strength.

The work of the Brahmō Samāj was successful enough to result in both emulation and opposition. The Sat Sabhā, founded in 1866, was directly modelled after the Brahmō Samāj by its founder, Lālā Behārī Lāl, an ex-Brahmō.<sup>15</sup> This organization was dedicated to social reform and education, as was the Brahmō Samāj, but with one major difference; the Sat Sabhā sought to utilize Punjābī as the sole medium of its work. There was a close connection between the two organizations in their basic tenets, with the Sat Sabhā also following a theistic and eclectic ideology. One of the results of this similarity was that in later years both the Sat Sabhā and the Brahmō Samāj were criticized for being too eclectic and too "tainted with foreignism."<sup>16</sup>

Opposition to the activities of the Brahmō Samāj within the Punjāb appeared in the 1870's primarily from orthodox Hindū leaders who resented the criticism levelled against traditional Hindūism by individual Brahmō Samājists and by the Samāj as an organization. Shradhā Rām Phillaurī led much of the orthodox response to the Brahmō Samāj through his speaking tours, writings, and public debates in which he challenged the Brahmō reformers, especially Novīn Chandra Rāi.<sup>17</sup> While counterattacks by conservative Punjābī Hindūs were a constant

and continual factor, it was not this opposition that provided a serious challenge to the position of the Brahma Samāj or to the dominance of the Bengālī elite associated with it. Brahma-Bengālī leadership was drastically curtailed by the emergence of a new Punjābī elite and by the rise of a rival organization, the Ārya Samāj. As more and more Punjābī Hindūs began to receive western education and to find places in the new professions, they too became concerned with religious and social questions within the province. This new Punjābī elite, however, did not turn to the ideology and programmes of the Brahma Samāj, but, instead, to the Ārya Samāj.

This Punjābī challenge crystallized with the arrival of Swāmī Dayānand Saraswatī in 1877. While in Delhī for the great Durbār in honour of Queen Victoria, Dayānand was invited to visit Lāhore and the Punjāb by a group of local leaders, including Novīn Chandra Rāi.<sup>18</sup> During his only visit to the Punjāb, from April 1877 to July 1878, he founded nine Ārya Samājes and in each case the local Brahma Samāj chapter faced a decision—to join the new movement, to offer friendly co-operation, or to oppose it.<sup>19</sup> The decision varied from place to place, but, more often than not, it was to oppose the Ārya Samāj. The results of either co-operation or opposition were roughly the same—in both cases the Brahma Samāj lost membership and support. Generally, those who left the Brahma Samāj for the Ārya Samāj were Punjābī Hindūs. Some Bengālīs joined the Ārya Samāj, but few remained in it for any length of time; two exceptions to this pattern were Bābū Bechā Rām Chatterjee, president of the Sukkur Ārya Samāj in Sind, and Kālī Prosanna Chatterjee of Lāhore.<sup>20</sup>

The Brahma Samāj also faced other locally-inspired competitors and in the case of the Dev Samāj was confronted with a rival largely of its own creation. Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotrī was one of the most promising young men of the Lāhore Brahma Samāj. A brilliant speaker, a publicist of considerable note, and a Brahma missionary, Pandit Agnihotrī was one of the few young Punjābīs to dedicate himself to the Brahma cause. This early promise was not fulfilled and, in 1887, Agnihotrī broke with the Brahma Samāj to form his own organization, the Dev Samāj or Divine Society. Agnihotrī announced himself as “Dev Gurū Bhagwān,” and recruited members from the community and from his former affiliates in the Brahma Samāj.<sup>21</sup> While the Brahmōs found themselves competing with organizations such as the Ārya Samāj and the Dev Samāj, they were able to stave off the internal divisions that

plagued the movement in Bengāl. The split between the followers of Keshab Chandra Sen's New Dispensation and the Sād̄hāran Brahmō Samāj that divided the movement into bitter factions in Bengāl was avoided in the Punjāb. The Lāhore Brahmō Samāj joined neither of the two new societies and continued to list among its ministers members of both factions.<sup>22</sup> The distance from Bengāl served to insulate the small Bengālī community from dissension produced in the home province, but left the movement to face local challenges.

The question as to which organization would dominate, the new Ārya Samāj or the older Brahmō Samāj, ended only in the 1880's, when the Ārya Samāj succeeded in a struggle for the allegiance of the new educated Punjābī Hindūs. Brahmō influence among the students at the Government College, Lāhore, was considerable. Many of the students attending this institution joined the Brahmō Samāj and were active in it; however, they gradually drifted away into the Ārya Samāj. Pandit Guru Datt, the leading ideologue of the Ārya Samāj, Lālā Munshī Rām (later Swāmī Shradhdhānand), the founder of the Gurukul Kāngrī, Lālā Lājpat Rāi, Samājist and political leader, Lālā Sāin Dās, later a commanding figure in the 'college' wing of the Ārya Samāj, and Bhagat Īshwar Dās were all members of the Lāhore Brahmō Samāj. But by the end of their student days they had changed their allegiance to the Ārya Samāj and there it remained. This failure of the Brahmō Samāj to retain the support of young Punjābī Hindūs limited the future influence of that organization and resulted from a rejection by Punjābī Hindūs of the Brahmō Samāj ideology and of the attitudes behind that ideology.

The Brahmō Samāj was too eclectic, too tolerant and at the same time too socially radical to win widespread acceptance in the Punjāb. Its eclecticism led to an appreciation of all religions, including Christianity, while its social radicalism often offended Punjābīs. An example of this was the *Prīti Bhojan*, or fraternal feast, held by the Lāhore Brahmō Samāj. While this communal meal was intended to bind the membership together, many of the leading Punjābī Brahmōs refused to take part for fear of breaking caste restrictions.<sup>23</sup> A new ideology, more militant and at the same time less radical, was needed, and the Ārya Samāj provided just such an ideology. Bepin Chandra Pāl, noting this failure of the Brahmō Samāj, commented that what was wanted was "a direct message of monotheism on the authority of the Vedas, because such a message would place the modern Hindū religion on the same plane as Christianity or Islām, and it was this more perhaps than any spiritual



need that moved the youthful intelligentsia of the Punjāb in those days. The Brahmo Samāj by its universalism and particularly by its open appreciation of Christian ethics and piety did not meet this need of the Punjābī mind. This is why the message of the movement of Pandit Dayānand had such large, if not almost universal, acceptance of the intellectual classes of the Punjābee Hindūs."<sup>24</sup> The Ārya Samāj was aggressive, insistent on the superiority of Hindūism and in the sphere of social reform careful never to force a break with the caste *birādarīs*; never in its religious reforms to leave the world of Hindūism. With the Ārya Samāj's success in recruiting the new Hindū elite, the Brahmo Samāj became increasingly a Bengālī organization, drawing nearly all its membership from the Bengālī community.

Successful competition from other elites did not end Bengālī influence within the province. Instead it indicated a shift in the areas of such influence and leadership. During the 1860's and 1870's, Bengālīs primarily concerned themselves with social reform and education; in the next two decades, leadership in these areas came from the Ārya Samāj and from numerous other new organizations existent in all three religious communities of the Punjāb. Nevertheless, Bengālīs still led in politics and in the linguistic controversies, while they participated as followers in other new social and educational movements.

One of the most surprising areas of interest and public action on the part of Bengālīs was the promotion of Hindī. Efforts to press for the acceptance of Hindī in instruction and in government service paralleled and did not conflict with the attempt to have English declared the medium of higher education. The years 1881 and 1882 witnessed two controversies over language. The establishment of the Hunter Commission on educational policy initiated a debate between Muslims who wanted to retain Urdū as both the language of the lower educational levels and of administration, and the Hindūs who wanted to replace it with Hindī. In this controversy, the Bengālīs sided with their co-religionists. Lājpat Rāi, speaking of this Brahmo support for Hindī, stated: "Although Brahmo literature did not very much glorify Hindūism, its atmosphere was not free from Hindū nationalism. The Brahmos were much enamoured of the English people and English culture, but as compared with Islām they respected pristine Hindūism. They were votaries of Sanskrit and Hindī, and in the Urdū-Hindī controversy they advocated the cause of Hindī."<sup>25</sup>

A second controversy erupted between the 'orientalists,' led by Dr

G. W. Leitner who called for the establishment of an Oriental University which would teach primarily in the Indian languages, and the educated Indian community, led by Bengālī Brahmos who wanted to have higher education taught in English. They feared, as did many of the Punjābī intelligentsia, that an 'oriental' education would be useless in preparing for government service or for the new professions of law, medicine, and journalism.<sup>26</sup>

From their institutional bases, the Brahma Samāj and the Indian Association, the Bengālīs mounted their attack on 'oriental learning';<sup>27</sup> however, their most effective weapon was the *Tribune*. Founded in 1881 by Sardār Dyāl Singh Majithiā, an English-language newspaper, the *Tribune* was the most singly effective voice of the Bengālīs and of the educated Hindūs of the Punjāb. Dyāl Singh Majithiā, a Sikh aristocrat, a philanthropist and lifetime supporter of the Brahma Samāj founded the *Tribune* partially in response to Surendranāth Banerjea's first tour of the Punjāb in 1877.<sup>28</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, the *Tribune* was in attitude and personnel largely Bengālī and Brahma. Seetal Chandra Mukherjee served as the first editor of the *Tribune*, although he remained in Allāhābād where he also edited the *People*. Sitala Kānta Chatterjee, who went to Lāhore as sub-editor of the *Tribune*, assumed the editorship after Seetal Chandra stepped down in 1887, while B. C. Pāl moved into the vacant post of sub-editor.<sup>29</sup> Not only was the staff largely Bengālī, but the trustees and close associates of Dyāl Singh were also Bengālīs. One of the few exceptions to the Bengālī-Brahma nature of the *Tribune* staff was Kālī Prosanna Chatterjee, a sub-editor and a prominent Ārya who taught science at the Dayānand Anglo-Vedic schools, managed and supported by the Ārya Samāj.<sup>30</sup>

The Bengālīs most vocal in the demand for Hindī were Bābū Novīn Chandra Rāi, Sitala Kānta Chatterjee, and Kālī Prosanna Chatterjee. All three wrote and spoke in support of the adoption of the Devanāgarī script, for the promotion of Hindī literature and, particularly, for its acceptance as the medium of instruction in government-schools. Novīn Chandra Rāi was the most persuasive of the three. He wrote in Hindī, advocated its use, and encouraged Punjābī pandits to adopt Hindī. As an educator and outstanding public figure, he commanded widespread public attention. Novīn Chandra participated in the Brahma Samāj experience in translating their literature from Bengālī or English into one of the languages current in the Punjāb<sup>31</sup> and became convinced that Hindī should be the language of communication throughout the province.

This advocacy of Hindī was on two levels : the desire to use the Devanāgarī script and the hope of having Hindī, the language, accepted by the schools, and as a general communicative medium. While Hindī as a language was discussed and, thanks to Novīn Chandra, increasingly used, it was the controversy over a script that received the most public attention. The issue was clearly defined and was, in its implications, directly anti-Muslim. In later years, this agitation largely against the Perso-Arabic script evolved into a movement against the Urdū language; a movement supported by Bengālīs and Ārya Samājists, as well as orthodox Hindūs. In this, as in other fields, the Brahmo Samāj and the Bengālīs had pioneered. It seems rather ironic, though, that it was Bengālīs who had such a strong leadership role in the drive for Hindī, a language that was for them even more foreign than it was for many Punjābīs.

Bengālīs participated and were innovators in the political and pre-political groups formed in the 1870's and 1880's. Here again organizations created elsewhere and transported to the Punjāb by Bengālīs were initially dominated by them. Bengālīs acted as innovators, introducing new attitudes and ideas into the Punjāb which they received from the home province of Bengāl. They were aided in this innovative role by their continual association with Bengāl. Leaders of the stature of Surendranāth Banerjea, Keshab Chandra Sen, and Swāmī Vivekānanda travelled repeatedly to the Punjāb to win support for their programmes and causes. Bengālīs went to visit friends or relatives, to conduct business, or to proselytize for various social, political, or religious movements of Bengāl. In his autobiography, Nagendranāth Gupta mentioned meeting many Bengālīs in Lāhore, including Sivanāth Shāstrī and Pratāp Chandra Majumdār who went to deliver lectures on the Brahmo Samāj, and Dr Kālī Gupta and Ānand Mohan Bose who went to visit friends.<sup>32</sup> This was a two-way exchange, with Bengālīs travelling from the Punjāb back to Bengāl for visits or to retire. A continuous pattern of interaction and communication was maintained. For the public figures who went to the north-west, the Bengālī communities of the North-Western Provinces and the Punjāb were ready-made audiences, while for the Bengālīs in these communities the speakers were living links with Bengāl.

In 1877, Surendranāth Banerjea made his first tour of the north-west, including the Punjāb. This tour, sparked by the lowering of the age limit in the Civil Service examinations, resulted in the founding of the Lāhore Indian Association, in Banerjea's own words, "the first political

organization in the Punjāb that provided a common platform for all sections of the Indian community.<sup>33</sup> Jogendra Chandra Bose and Kālī Prosanna Roy soon became recognized leaders of the Indian Association,<sup>34</sup> while Bengālī participation in and support for the Association was greater than for any other provincial organization, with the possible exception of the Punjāb Brahmo Samāj. Bengālī-Brahmo efforts in the political sphere were undergirded mainly by Sardār Dyāl Singh, who financially underwrote the Indian Association, so much so that after his death in 1898 the organization suffered an almost total eclipse.<sup>35</sup>

A similar pattern of participation is found in the Indian National Congress. Again, both Kālī Prosanna Roy and Jogendra Bose led and again both were allied with Sardār Dyāl Singh. For the Bengālī community, however, membership in the Congress was somewhat dangerous. Their position as government servants made overt support of the Congress inadvisable and so they tended to let Dyāl Singh and the *Tribune* publicly back the Congress, while the majority of the Bengālī community restricted its politics to the somewhat safer and less controversial Indian Association.<sup>36</sup> In addition to the Indian Association and the Indian National Congress, a third organization, the Lāhore Students Association, was founded in 1881 on the pattern of the Students' Association of Bengāl. Once again Novīn Chandra Rāi provided the main leadership and, as usual with Bengālī-sponsored organizations and campaigns, the *Tribune* gave its approval.<sup>37</sup> The *Tribune*, with its strong Bengālī element, was an important factor in projects sponsored by the Bengālī community. Considerable coverage was given to Brahmo Samāj events, information of general interest to the Bengālī community, and to news of the home province.

Surendranāth Banerjea's imprisonment in 1883 was widely reported in the *Tribune*, as were the resulting meetings of sympathy and protest. Expressions of encouragement for Banerjea were many, but of even more interest were expressions of solidarity with Bengāl as a province and with Bengālīs as a people. One writer in the *Tribune* stated that "the Punjāb feels for Bengāl and Bengāl feels for the Punjāb because the cause of the Punjāb is identical with that of Bengāl. The Punjāb feels for Surendranāth Banerjea because that Bengālī patriot has worked much and unselfishly in the interest and for the welfare of India—Punjāb not excepted. The Punjāb feels for Bengāl because she full well knows that her legitimate rights cannot be secured without the co-operation of Bengāl—because she knows that without the aid of Bengāl—as those of

Bombay and Madrās—she cannot save the gifts of the benign English government from the constant attempts of rampant Anglo-Indian to snatch them away...”<sup>38</sup> This still early conceptualization of nationalism and of supra-regional identity was furthered by continual interaction between Bengālīs and Punjābīs, an interaction largely made possible by the link community of Bengālīs. On the negative side of Bengālī public and political life was a continuing conflict with Punjābī Āryas. This competition between Āryas and Brahmos had its roots in the early struggles of the Ārya Samāj to establish itself in the Punjāb. Competition between an Ārya-led faction in the Congress Party and another group composed mainly of Brahmos, both Bengālī and Punjābī, weakened the development of the National Congress throughout the late nineteenth century. The landed aristocratic outlook of the Bengālī intellectual clashed with that of the more enterprising, money- and business-oriented Punjābī. Significantly, Sardār Dyāl Singh, the chief supporter of the Bengālī Brahmos, was himself an old landed aristocrat. This competition appeared not only in the Congress but also in the new industrial and commercial enterprises founded in Lāhore.

Patterns of organizational participation by the Bengālī community of the Punjāb shifted during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. They continued to support causes they were already involved in, held leading roles in the political and linguistic spheres, and became followers in several organizations which arose during this period. The Ārya Samāj, the Sanātan Dharma Sabhās, which defended orthodox Hindūism, the Hindū Orphan Relief Movement of the 1890’s, and the Punjāb Science Institute all received backing from the Bengālī community. The latter, the Science Institute, was popular with Bengālīs partly because of the leadership of Ruchī Rām Sāhnī, one of the few Punjābīs who had remained in the Lāhore Brahmo Samāj. Bengālīs continued to found their own organizations, such as the Banglā Sāhitya Sabbhā which was established in 1885 with the goal of “creating a taste for Bengālī language and literature in the Punjāb...”<sup>39</sup> The temperance movement was popular with Bengālīs and attracted Bengālī participation, particularly the Lāhore Purity Association, a close ally of the Lāhore Brahmo Samāj. The issues that moved Bengālīs during the latter half of the nineteenth century are illustrated in part by the career of Protul Chandra Chatterjī, a subscriber to the Punjāb Science Institute and to the Hindū Orphan Relief Movement, a member of the Indian Association, and a strong supporter of the Dayānand Anglo-Vedic schools.<sup>40</sup> By and large, by the

end of the nineteenth century Bengālīs in the Punjāb found themselves supporters and followers in movements led by and dominated by a new aggressive Hindū elite.

The Bengālī community was always small, but it had been in the 1860's and 1870's the most educated and most westernized group in the Punjāb. Economically they were not in competition with Punjābīs, at least not initially, but after 1880, the number of educated Punjābīs began to increase rapidly and, in the years following, there were indications of resentment against the professional and occupational position of the Bengālīs. In 1881, a letter appeared in the *Tribune* criticizing Bengālīs as being idolatrous—this in reference to the celebrations of *Durgā Pūjā*;<sup>41</sup> another letter claimed that the students of Calcuttā University were "disloyal"<sup>42</sup> and, in the same year, a controversy arose over the possible appointment of a Bengālī as Director of Public Instruction in Patialā.<sup>43</sup> A similar controversy erupted in 1886 over the supposed dominance of Bengālīs in the government services of the Mahārājā of Kashmīr.<sup>44</sup> These data do not provide a clear indication of what was happening, but they do point to the possibility of competition for government posts between the older Bengālī elite and the new rising Punjābī elite which began to search for jobs within and beyond the province.

The Bengālī community of the Punjāb had never been large. Taking the figures for the number of Bengālī speakers in the Punjāb the following pattern emerges :

| NUMBER OF BENGĀLĪ-SPEAKERS <sup>45</sup> |               |
|--|---------------|
| <i>Census</i>                            | <i>Number</i> |
| 1881                                     | 2,891         |
| 1891                                     | 2,263         |
| 1901                                     | 2,562         |
| 1911                                     | 2,214         |
| 1921                                     | 4,852         |

The most outstanding feature of this community was its apparent stability with the only significant increase occurring in the 1911-1921 period. This increase was almost solely limited to the Delhī area and resulted from the transfer of the Central Government from Calcuttā to Delhī. During the previous decades the number had actually decreased from a high in 1881 to a low in 1911. E. D. Maclagan noted in the census of 1891 a drop in the number of clerks from Bengāl and also from

the United Provinces.<sup>46</sup> The figures would indicate that over a period of 30 years the process of replacement of non-Punjābī clerks by Punjābīs was well under way and was responsible for the steadily shrinking Bengālī community. The data for Kāyasthas, the only other major non-Punjābī element among the educated Indians, also show relative stability, with a very slight decline over the first three census periods, 1881 through 1911, and then a sharp drop of nearly 50 per cent in the last decade, from 1911-1921.

NUMBER OF KĀYASTHAS<sup>47</sup>

| <i>Census</i> | <i>Number</i> |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1881          | 13,420        |
| 1891          | 13,598        |
| 1901          | 13,272        |
| 1911          | 13,374        |
| 1921          | 7,462         |

While the number of Bengālīs remained relatively stable, the pattern of distribution was also unchanged. Bengālīs were centred in the major towns with the greatest number in Lāhore followed by Delhī, Simlā, Rāwalpindī and Ambālā. Delhī only surpassed Lāhore in the number of Bengālīs after the capital was moved in 1911.

DISTRIBUTION OF BENGĀLĪS BY MAJOR CENTRES<sup>48</sup>

| 1901       |     | 1911       |     |
|------------|-----|------------|-----|
| Lāhore     | 536 | Delhī      | 634 |
| Delhī      | 459 | Lāhore     | 475 |
| Rāwalpindī | 568 | Rāwalpindī | 302 |
| Simlā      | 200 | Simlā      | 302 |
| Ambālā     | 198 | Ambālā     | 125 |

Along with the figures for the native speakers of Bengālī, two other sets of statistics are given in the census reports, one under the title "Bengālīs" and the other for the number of individuals born in Bengāl and living in the Punjāb. Both sets of figures are extremely unreliable and demonstrate some of the difficulties inherent in utilizing census data. The Bangliā designation in the 1881 census is confused with Bengālīs and a criminal tribe which also goes by the name of Bangliā. The figure given by Ibbetson is obviously that of the criminal tribe in spite of his

insistence that it covers only Bengāl, the geographic designation.<sup>49</sup> In addition many Bengālīs were entered under their caste and thus remained undifferentiated from the general Punjābī groupings. The figures for emigrants from Bengāl are also unreliable. There was considerable confusion among the enumerators as to the location of towns and birthplaces outside of the Punjāb with the result that arbitrary designations were given as either the North-West Provinces or Bengāl. The latter could as well include Orissā, Bihār, or even Āssām. Maclagan himself comments on the inconsistency of these figures in the Census Report of 1891, and for this reason the language designation has been used with the full knowledge that it too is subject to errors and inaccuracies.<sup>50</sup>

In spite of the limitations of data and methodology, the process of inter-regional development that carried Bengālīs into the north-west is clearly evident. The expansion of the British state produced a series of Bengālī communities stretching from Calcuttā to the Punjāb and beyond. A Bengālī elite came into existence in the areas up river from Bengāl, an elite that functioned as a link between the British and their Indian subjects, between these subjects and the British, and between Bengāl and the north-west. The chain of Bengālī communities, once in existence, acted as a communication system transferring new ideas and attitudes, new institutions and causes created in Bengāl to the non-Bengālī areas. As possessors of new concepts, superior bureaucratic and linguistic skills, they gained considerable social status which aided them in finding an audience for their ideas.

The creation of new regional elites which challenged their social and economic position did not mean an end to this pattern of communications. It continued to exist. As long as Bengāl remained an innovator, a region in advance socially or politically of other regions in India, the Bengālī communities in such areas as the Punjāb continued to act as transmitters of the new ideological products of Bengāl. While the presence of Bengālī elites in non-Bengālī areas produced some anti-Bengālī feeling, it also facilitated the development of supra-regional consciousness, the necessary prerequisite for later nationalist conceptualization. Intra-regional migration, set off by the establishment of the British-Indian Government, became in time one of the many factors contributing to the destruction of that same government.



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THE AGRI-HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY  
OF THE PUNJĀB, 1851-1871

IAN J. KERR

Writing at the beginning of the 1960's, Kusum Nair stated in her influential book, *Blossoms in the Dust*, that Indian crop yields were among the world's lowest and that "productivity cannot be improved unless the millions of peasants that make up the Indian farming community are persuaded to adopt more scientific techniques of cultivation."<sup>1</sup> Mrs Nair further noted that the Indian Government was making a major effort to bring about a "sweeping technological revolution in the agricultural field" but that little investigation had been made of the attitudes and motivations of the farmer in the specific context of technological change and economic development. "Yet," she noted, "the success or failure of the efforts to change the conditions of the peasant's life and methods of work is of crucial concern to India, and indeed to the world."<sup>2</sup>

Attempts to persuade the peasants of South Asia to improve their cultivation techniques is not a recent development—such attempts have been made for over one hundred years. Historians of South Asia, however, have little studied the subject of technical change in agriculture and they have therefore contributed to the problem noted by Kusum Nair: the problem of lack of practical study of attempting to persuade peasants to adopt innovations without first adequately investigating the conditions and methods likely to make such persuasion successful.

One distressing consequence of the lack of historical study is that planners in contemporary South Asia work in a temporal vacuum seemingly unaware of past attempts, successful and unsuccessful, to improve agricultural practices.<sup>3</sup> Contemporary planners continue, therefore, to make mistakes similar to those that have defeated past attempts to induce technical change in agriculture. The most disheartening and frequent of these mistakes was the attempt to introduce some new agriculture practice (be it a crop variety, an implement, a new method of working the soil) to South Asia without adequately considering whether the proposed "improvement" was in fact suited to the needs and conditions of

indigenous agriculture.<sup>4</sup> As a British professor of agriculture observed after a visit to India in 1887, "there had never been any *systematic* attempt to get them [Britons involved in agricultural work in India] to learn what is known by natives of the principles underlying native practices. It is not difficult to see, and no practical man will wonder at it, that climate and general surroundings being so vastly different in India from those at home, British and American practices must be unsuited to Indian conditions."<sup>5</sup> A later writer referred to the beginnings of agricultural experimentation in India as "almost pathetic."<sup>6</sup>

How valid were the criticisms directed against the nineteenth-century attempts to improve agricultural techniques in India? Indeed, what kinds of efforts were made? Who made the efforts and how successful were they? What can we learn about the processes of technical change in Indian agriculture from those early attempts? This paper examines these questions through a case study of the structure and activities of the Punjāb Agri-Horticultural Society from 1851 to 1871.<sup>7</sup>

The Punjāb Agri-Horticultural Society was one of many such societies that existed in India in the third quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup> D.R. Gadgil refers to these societies as the first regular associations to interest themselves in the question of agricultural improvement and further states that Government botanical gardens and the agri-horticultural societies "were the main institutions for introducing agricultural improvements" in India down to 1866.<sup>9</sup>

The Punjāb Society held an organizational meeting at the Lāhore home of Sir Henry Lawrence on May 16, 1851, two years after the British had occupied the country. Henry Lawrence was elected president of the new society, Robert Montgomery and Major-General W. Battine became vice-presidents, Henry Cope was the secretary and William Kirke, the treasurer.<sup>10</sup> A council of five members, all of them possessing military rank, was also elected.<sup>11</sup> Officers and council members, it was agreed, would be elected annually from the members of the Society residing at Lāhore. Subscription rates were established at Rs. 2 per month.<sup>12</sup>

By the time the third meeting of the Society was held on July 8, 1851, the membership had grown to seventy-two of whom thirty-nine lived in Lāhore. The Governor-General of India, the Marquis of Dalhousie, agreed to become Patron of the Society and offered to provide an annual personal subscription of Rs. 500. Dalhousie also recommended to the Court of Directors of the East India Company that Government

donate Rs. 200 a month to the Society. Dalhousie also accepted the Punjāb Board of Administration's proposal to the Government of India that certain lands in Lāhore be turned over to the Society on permanent loan for the purpose of establishing horticultural gardens.<sup>13</sup>

The Society held seven meetings in 1851. At the seventh meeting on December 9 the membership learnt that the Court of Directors had sanctioned the monthly Government contribution of Rs. 200 and also were sending a small selection of seeds and agricultural implements to Lāhore for the Society's use. G. C. Barnes, Commissioner of the Lāhore Division, was elected vice-president in the place of the recently deceased Major-General Battine. Kirke resigned as treasurer and was replaced by J. H. Penn, an extra-assistant commissioner.<sup>14</sup>

By the end of 1851, certain basic features of the Punjāb Agri-Horticultural Society had emerged that were to remain present through 1851 and beyond. First, the active membership was largely drawn from the higher segment of the official British community, civil and military, resident in Lāhore. An examination of membership lists shows that Indians, the lower classes of British and Eurasians (composed primarily of non-commissioned soldiers and low-level Government employees), and the unofficial European community were little represented in the membership of the Society.<sup>15</sup> The lack of Indians was particularly noticeable. Only six of the one-hundred and five members of the Society at the end of 1851 were Indians.<sup>16</sup> The number of Indian members increased somewhat in 1852 and a "native secretary," Harsukh Rāi, was appointed to handle vernacular correspondence and to translate materials from English to the vernaculars for the edification of Punjābī farmers.<sup>17</sup> The longer-term trend, however, was decreasing participation by Indians and by 1864 the Society had but two subscribing Indian members: the Rājā of Chambā and the Rājā of Patiālā.<sup>18</sup>

Some effort was made in the mid-1860's to increase the number of Indian members. The annual report of the Society for the period May 1865 to May 1866 noted that few Indians were paying members and that "an attempt is once more being made to get natives to cooperate."<sup>19</sup> "Two native gentlemen have agreed to act as secretaries, and by their help something may be done."<sup>20</sup> These attempts, however, appear to have been largely unsuccessful and perhaps not completely sincere. The *Koh-i-Nūr*, an Urdū newspaper in Lāhore, referred in 1873 to native gentlemen who were called members of the Society "for form's sake and pay subscriptions..."<sup>21</sup> Regardless of the precise number of Indian

members, it is evident that most members of the Society, Indian and European, had little direct connection with Punjāb agriculture and were largely people in Government service.<sup>22</sup>

A second basic feature already evident by the end of 1851 was the acquisition of governmental support for the Society's activities. This support was expressed directly through financial subsidies and loans of land and indirectly through the utilization of Government officers to assist the Society in carrying out its programmes. Much of the Society's attempt to gather information about agricultural conditions and practices in the Punjāb was, for example, carried out through official channels.

Specifically on the financial side, the Punjāb Agri-Horticultural Society's acceptance of Government assistance to supplement its privately raised income soon turned into a reliance on Government financial support and then into a situation where the bulk of the Society's income came from various levels of Government. By the end of the period under study, the Society's fiscal year 1871-72, the total income of the Society from all sources was Rs. 18,647 of which 13,300 (71%) came from Government sources and but Rs. 2,135 (11%) from members' subscriptions.<sup>23</sup> A later set of figures for the fiscal year 1877-78 provides a more detailed breakdown of the sources of the Society's income:<sup>24</sup>

| <i>Source</i>                | <i>Amount in Rupees</i> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Imperial Revenues            | 5,400                   |
| Provincial Revenues          | 3,600                   |
| Local and Municipal Rates    | 6,150                   |
| Members Subscriptions        | 1,100                   |
| Sale of Garden Produce, etc. | 4,740                   |
| Total                        | 20,990                  |

The inter-weaving of the two features discussed above—membership drawn primarily from the higher ranks of the British civil and military officers and governmental support of the Society—makes it incorrect to label the Punjāb Agri-Horticultural Society a private organization.<sup>25</sup> It was, to be sure, founded on a voluntary basis, but, like many other British-founded organizations in India, the private and official aspects rapidly became mixed. Indeed within colonial situations very few associations formed by members of the ruling group can avoid becoming

instrumentalities of colonial rule—in some cases the relationship is simply more covert and relates to diffused patterns of dominance rather than directly to institutionalized rule. In the case of the Punjāb Agri-Horticultural Society, however, the relationship was direct and open—the Society was, in fact, a semi-autonomous agency of Government. Not only was it heavily financed by Government but throughout the period under study the chief officers of the Society—the president and/or one of the vice-presidents—were almost always one of the highest ranking members of the Punjāb Government, e. g. the lieutenant-governor, the financial commissioner or the judicial commissioner.<sup>26</sup> Some observers saw this close relationship with Government in a positive light. An article in the *Friend of India* of March 9, 1854, stated that the Punjāb Society differed from all similar bodies in India insofar as it was not just a collection of gentlemen interested in horticulture who contributed money to be returned to them in fruits and vegetables.<sup>27</sup> “It is really a department of the administration, and by no means the least important or efficient.”<sup>28</sup> The writer continued: “The Society was organized in 1851, and was almost immediately successful. Patronized by the Governor-General, and aided by all the local chiefs, it received the active support of the more important natives, and became directly mixed up with the Administration.”<sup>29</sup>

A third and perhaps unavoidable feature of the Society that had appeared by the end of 1851 was the concentration of the Society's activities in the Lāhore urban area. The meetings were held in Lāhore, the majority of the membership lived in and about Lāhore, the Society's gardens were in Lāhore. Indeed, throughout its existence the Society directed an important part of its efforts towards meeting the horticultural needs of the European urban-dwellers of Lāhore. For example, the Society sponsored flower and vegetable prize-shows in Lāhore which encouraged the *mālīs* (gardeners) of European gentlemen to greater efforts and which provided the European society of Lāhore with an opportunity to gather and to be seen. In the 1850's and 1860's, the *Lāhore Chronicle* often published accounts of the Society's prize-shows like the following: “Suffice it to say that the beauty and fashion of Lāhore promenaded the delightful garden to the music of two excellent bands. The day which at first threatened to prove unpropitious happily cleared off, and though sunny, was not unpleasant.”<sup>30</sup>

Members of the Society who did not live close to Lāhore could do little more than correspond with the Society and receive an occasional



package of seeds to be planted in some lonely mofussil garden. The Lāhore focus of the Society also limited the contact with the majority of the Punjābī farmers and thus made it difficult for the Society to carry out its stated purpose of improving agriculture throughout the province. Governor-General Dalhousie recognized the dangers of an excessively Lāhore-centred organization when he recommended the Rs.200 a month Government grant "on the understanding that the views of the Society extend over the *whole* Punjāb, and that their future exertions will not be limited to the accomplishment of purposes more restricted than those which they have now announced..."<sup>31</sup>

The success of the Punjāb Agri-Horticultural Society as a viable association with an adequately-sized and interested membership, suitable funding, and an effective internal organization, was uneven during the period 1851-1871. The fluctuating fortunes of the Society can be divided into four rough periods : (i) 1851-1856; (ii) 1856-1861; (iii) 1861-1867; (iv) 1867-1871.

The Society started energetically and may have enjoyed its most successful period from 1851 to 1856. The meetings were well attended and the total membership climbed steadily to reach a figure of over two hundred in 1853 and 1854. Henry Cope capably served in the crucial post of secretary. After leaving the Punjāb, Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Henry M. Lawrence (erstwhile president of the Punjāb Board of Administration) wrote a letter to the Society on February 1, 1853, resigning as president and expressing his appreciation of Cope. Lawrence stated : "Cope has been the life and soul of the Institution ; indeed that but for his exertions, it could not have lived a month, and that to his ability and untiring zeal the prosperous condition of the Society is almost entirely owing."<sup>32</sup> The excessive dependence of the Society on Cope was undoubtedly a weakness of the organization. The Society in the later periods also depended excessively on the energy and capabilities of whosoever occupied the position of secretary. Another important figure was the head gardener. During most of the period 1851-1856, this position was adequately filled by Mr Appleby.

The Society went into decline during the second period, 1856-1861. By 1856, the Society faced financial difficulty. At a meeting on December 30, 1856, the Society resolved to borrow up to Rs. 5,000 in order to pay off its debts, to limit monthly expenditures to one-half of its actual receipts, to let out the cultivated portion of the Society's garden maintaining only the ornamental portion (at an expense not to exceed Rs. 50

a month) and to dispense (reluctantly) with the services of the gardener, Mr Appleby.<sup>33</sup> Financial problems effectively "paralysed the efforts of the Society" through early 1859.<sup>34</sup> By April of 1859, many of the debts had been liquidated but the Society continued to languish until 1861 in part because a person with sufficient vigour and continuing interest could not be found to assume the post of secretary. Henry Cope had resigned in March 1856 and, from then until 1861, the Society went through a succession of secretaries.<sup>35</sup> Throughout this period meetings were infrequent and not well attended.<sup>36</sup> The membership was down to seventy-six by May 1, 1859.<sup>37</sup>

In 1859 and 1860, efforts were made to resuscitate the Society. The *Lahore Chronicle* referred in March 1860 "to the exertions which have been, and are being, made by the officers attached to this Society, to restore it to a healthy condition."<sup>38</sup> These efforts, however, were not very successful and an effective revival of the Society did not begin until 1861 when Dr E. B. Brown, a professor at the Lahore Medical College, took charge both of the garden and the post of secretary. Brown, assisted by the strong support of Lieutenant-Governor Montgomery, was able to restore the Society to much of its original vigour.<sup>39</sup> The third period, 1861-1866, is therefore one of restoration and organizational well-being for the Punjab Agri-Horticultural Society. One indicator of its restored health was a surplus financial position at the end of 1862.<sup>40</sup>

In 1863, Cope returned to an official connection with the Society by accepting the post of general secretary and editor of the Society's proceedings.<sup>41</sup> In this capacity he was responsible for correspondence and publicizing the Society's activities.<sup>42</sup> Dr Brown continued to supervise the distribution of seeds, the collection of subscriptions and the keeping of accounts. The Society prospered. Well-attended meetings were held regularly and the *Lahore Chronicle* from 1863 to 1866 was again full of accounts of the Society's proceedings.<sup>43</sup> A project was begun to print a selected collection of papers from the Society's *Proceedings*.<sup>44</sup> The Government of India increased its monthly grant to Rs. 250.<sup>45</sup> And the membership again topped two hundred.<sup>46</sup>

The fourth period began in 1867. This was another period of decline though not as precipitous or as extensive as that of 1856-1861. Hints of financial difficulties appear in the *Proceedings* and an attempt was made to get the Government to again increase its financial support<sup>47</sup>—an attempt that successfully obtained an additional Rs. 200 per month.<sup>48</sup>

By 1872, the Society was being referred to as a pecuniary success but in need of "stirring up sadly."<sup>49</sup>

As a viable organization, then, the Punjāb Agri-Horticultural Society had a somewhat erratic existence during the twenty years from 1851 to 1871. Periods of organizational strength and vigour were followed by periods of decline. The nature and defects of the organization—notably its uncertain financial position and its excessive reliance on the hard work and zeal of a few key people—affected the ability of the Society to pursue its own stated objectives vis-a-vis the improvement of agriculture in the Punjāb.

The objectives of the Society set forth at the first meeting were :

1. The improvement of existing modes of cultivation, and especially of irrigation, the introduction of some system of manure, which is now much neglected, the improvement of existing agricultural implements, the introduction of new ones, and the improvement of the breed of cattle, horses, etc. The introduction, from other parts of India, from Europe, America and Africa, of such agricultural productions as are likely to thrive in this country, to be suitable to the means of the people, and to add to its resources, and, lastly, the development of such articles of vegetable produce as are already items of commerce in the Punjāb.

2. The improvement of the vegetables now commonly cultivated, the introduction of new kinds from other parts of the globe, the introduction and cultivation of ornamental flowers.

3. The introduction, into all parts of the Punjāb, by means, if possible, of local nurseries at the principal stations, to be kept up by district officers, in correspondence with the Society, of better kinds of fruit, timber and ornamental trees of which the country is at present peculiarly destitute, especially as the introduction and extensive dissemination of trees of all kinds is known to be considered most desirable by the highest authority in the land.

4. The formation of one or more gardens, in different localities at Lāhore, on an extensive plan, in which to form nurseries of trees for distribution, and to conduct experiments connected with the several pursuits of the Society, that is in regard to productions likely to suit the climate and soil of this part of India.

5. That it shall be one of the special objects of the Society to

give prizes, at periods hereafter to be fixed, to such persons, European and Native, as may be desirous of competing for the same, by the exhibition of fruits, flowers, vegetables, agricultural produce, and agricultural implements.<sup>50</sup>

The basic objectives of the Society were reaffirmed somewhat more succinctly in the revised bylaws enacted in 1864: "The objects of the Society include the improvement by all means of existing modes of cultivation, the introduction of new plants for culture, the providing of seeds and plants for members, and the systematic collection and diffusion of information of all kinds connected with Agriculture, Horticulture, Aboriculture and allied pursuits."<sup>51</sup>

The objectives of the Society were comprehensive and worthwhile. Most people interested in improving South Asian agriculture today could subscribe to the general objectives outlined by the Society in 1864 if not to some of the specific goals and procedures stated in 1851. The crucial questions also remain the same today as they were in the mid-nineteenth century. What measures were implemented to achieve the stated objectives? How successful was the Society in achieving its goals? What can we learn about the processes of technical change in South Asian agriculture from the attempts?

The concern for the "systematic collection and diffusion of information" serves as a good beginning point. This objective speaks directly to one of Kusum Nair's arguments mentioned at the beginning of this paper—namely the erroneous attempt to induce agrarian change without proper study. How effectively did the Punjāb Agri-Horticultural Society meet its stated objective?

The Society collected a lot of information about agriculture and agricultural practices in the Punjāb. Unfortunately, much of the information was of a chatty, anecdotal variety submitted haphazardly by Britons describing their efforts to grow European flowers and vegetables in the often uncongenial environment of the Punjāb. Punjābī and Punjābī agricultural practices were singularly absent from this body of "information." In a few specific cases where the Society felt a particular crop had commercial promise, the existing situation and/or future possibilities were examined with some care. One finds, therefore, material in the *Proceedings* on flax, sericulture, indigo and cotton.<sup>52</sup> This kind of information about commercial crops, however, had little relevance to most Punjāb agriculture.

The major attempt to collect systematically a broad-based body of information about agriculture in the Punjāb began in 1851 through the urging of Lieutenant-Colonel G. B. Tremenheere.<sup>53</sup> Tremenheere developed a set of thirty-two questions (reproduced in the Appendix to this paper) which were submitted to the Board of Administration with the request that Government officials collect the desired information, "The questions were printed, distributed to every district and explained to intelligent natives conversant with agricultural pursuits. The replies which have been put into form by Deputy Commissioners, and transmitted through their official superiors, contain a mass of valuable data, concerning the staple products of the Punjāb and modes of cultivation, which we believe has not been before collected for any other part of India."<sup>54</sup> Some of the material submitted by the Deputy Commissioners was reproduced in the Society's *Proceedings* and this material, plus his own observations, provide Tremenheere with the basis for a number of interesting papers on the state of Punjāb agriculture.<sup>55</sup> There is little evidence to show, however, that the Society put to effective use the material collected in this fashion in 1851, 1852 and 1853. The effort was not continued in later years.

The information collected by the Society plus other material it wished to disseminate (e. g. about new crops, improved implements, etc.) was diffused largely through the print medium. The *Proceedings* of the Society were printed in English and in the local languages and distributed to the members. The English newspaper at Lāhore and some of the Indian language newspapers also reproduced proceedings.<sup>56</sup> Pamphlets in local languages broadcast the objectives of the Society, explained new agricultural techniques or extolled the benefits of particular crops. Regardless of the quantity and quality of the material published by the Society, one must question the efficacy of an attempt to communicate with an illiterate and cautious peasantry living in many thousands of inaccessible villages through the medium of the printed word.<sup>57</sup>

The Society's garden in Lāhore did provide a model which helped diffuse knowledge about plants and cultivation techniques in the immediate environs of Lāhore, though the effect was largely seen in horticulture and floriculture.<sup>58</sup> Vegetable and flower prize-shows added to the modelling effect and provided some indigenous gardeners with monetary incentives to grow better produce. In the late 1860's, a gardening school was started at the Society's Lāhore garden in which, by 1870, some twenty boys studied the rudiments of English botanical

names, and practical gardening. This school, it was hoped, would in time supply the needs of the Punjāb and the Agri-Horticultural Garden for trained gardeners.<sup>59</sup>

Exogenous seeds, plants, shrubs and trees were acclimatized in the Lāhore garden of the Society and attempts were also made to grow improved varieties of plants indigenous to the Punjāb. The seed and seedlings collected from these experiments then were sent to "nurseries" maintained by Government or Local Fund Committees at the various district headquarter towns. The hope that the new crops would spread from these centres was "in the majority of instances... disappointed."<sup>60</sup>

Essentially the Society failed in its efforts to gather and diffuse information about agriculture in the Punjāb. A sustained, systematic programme of information collection was never developed. This basic failure alone, regardless of weaknesses in the methods of disseminating information, sufficed to render nugatory the efforts of the Society to improve the practice of agriculture in the Punjāb. The Society failed to acquire the necessary understanding of the agrarian system of the Punjāb and thus could not hope to be effective in a situation where a proposed change in cropping, in implement usage and so on had to be fitted into a complex, on-going set of agrestic relationships.<sup>61</sup>

The attempts of the Society to introduce new or improved crops into the Punjāb reads like a litany to failure—a failure shared by the Punjāb Government since its efforts were intermeshed with those of the Society. The Famine Commission *Report* in 1881 mentions the various crops the Society and/or Government had tried to introduce into the Punjāb : imphi, oats, new varieties of maize, Carolina rice, flax, better varieties of cotton, chinchona, China grass and silk.<sup>62</sup> The Famine Commission's assessment of these efforts is invariably the same : limited or no success.<sup>63</sup> The Commission applied the same assessment to the efforts to introduce lightweight iron ploughs, a better Persian wheel and improved manuring techniques.<sup>64</sup>

Given the Society's failure to gather good information about the situation it was trying to improve, the specific failures listed above are not surprising. The improved Persian wheel, for example, was designed in 1851 and the Society had a working model in operation in its garden by December of 1851.<sup>65</sup> The wheel worked well—it increased the water flow and its operation was within the energy capacities of the draught animals of the Punjāb.<sup>66</sup> However, the well-gear proved too complex to be made by the ordinary village artisan and the improved wheel

thus became useless to the ordinary Punjābī agriculturist.<sup>67</sup> The case of the wheel typifies the failure of the Punjāb Agri-Horticultural Society (and other, including modern, exponents of technical change in agriculture) to consider the entire, systemic context into which a given improvement had to be fitted.<sup>68</sup>

Throughout the twenty-year period, 1851-1871, the Society attempted to improve the agriculture, floriculture and horticulture of the Punjāb. Although the Society expended considerable time, effort and money, the results were disappointing. A writer in the *Koh-i-Nūr* of May 17, 1873, passed fitting judgement on the Society's work and suggested some of the reasons why its success had been so limited :

...the writer endeavours to show that, though the Society has been in existence for the last 20 or 22 years, it has done no good to the country. Beyond brief notices of the Society, which are published in English newspapers after long intervals, the public know nothing of its existence. Instead of using its exertions for improving and developing the agricultural resources of the country by suggesting to cultivators, zamīndārs, and gardeners, the best plans and methods for improving the capabilities of their lands, so as to fit them for the cultivation and growth of the higher kinds of grains and fruits, for the breeding of their cattle and their preservation against sickness, which is the object for which the Society has been established : all it does is to present now and then a few packets or *dālees* of flowers and vegetables to the Native gentlemen who are called its members for form's sake and pay subscriptions, or to please Europeans by a show of good flowers, fruits, and vegetables in their gardens.<sup>69</sup>

## APPENDIX

Sources : I. *Select Papers of the Agri-Horticultural Society of the Punjāb from Its Commencement to 1862* (Lāhore : 1868), pp. 55-56.

II. *Queries addressed to district and other officers on behalf of the Agri-Horticultural Society of the Punjāb, by Lieut-Col. Tremenheere :*

1. Please to give a list of the whole of the Rubee or Spring Crops ?

2. To distinguish those which are grown on the best lands, near towns and villages, from those on the poorer soils over the general face of the country.
3. To state the order in which these are grown, what crop follows another on the same ground, and whether there are any definite rules of practice in this respect ? If so, what is the rotation, or system of changes, which is found to answer best ?
4. Is any crop grown for the purposes of being ploughed into the soil in a green state, and improving it ?
5. Give a list of the crops in the cultivation of which manure is used.
6. Do cultivators collect as much manure as they can ?
7. What are the substances chiefly used as manure, and from whence procured ?
8. Are they allowed to ferment in heaps, or used fresh, and at what periods are they applied to the land ?
9. Is the refuse grain and husk of the "Til," or of any other oil seed, used as a dressing for the land ?
10. To what use is sugar-cane applied after the juice is expressed ?
11. Is the production of valuable crops limited for want of manure ? Or for want of the means of irrigation, or from what cause ?
12. Describe the crops to which irrigation is absolutely necessary ?
13. What is the greatest extent of land irrigated from one well ?
14. Are the water channels ever lined, so as to prevent loss by absorption and evaporation ?
15. State what crops are entirely dependent on the regularity of falls of rain ? Are they often lost altogether for want of a timely shower ? And which are most subject to this contingency ?
16. Can any hill torrents be pointed out, which by being bunded, would serve for irrigating the plains ?
17. Give a list of the Khureef or Autumn crops.
18. Those grown near villages, and those in the open country.
19. Those for which irrigation is necessary.
20. Those to which manure is applied.
21. The kinds of manure, and at what period of the cultivation they are laid on the land ?
22. The order in which these crops follow one another on the same ground ?
23. State generally, whether any and what difference exists between the method pursued in producing the Rubee and the Khureef crops.



24. Do cultivators differ in their practice in the same parts of the country ? Or is one uniform system pursued ?
25. Are there any differences observable in the degrees of success of farmers, and to what is it attributable ? Does one man get more from his land than another, and why ? Where can such differences be seen ?
26. Are fallows allowed, and for what length of time ?
27. Is the same kind of crop ever taken off the ground during two successive harvests, either the Rubee or Khureef ? If wheat, or any grain, is reaped in Spring, is the same grain sown again without any intermediate crop, and the same ground made to produce wheat again at the next Spring harvest ?
28. Is Drill Husbandry universal for all grain crops ? If not, specify those which are sown by the Drill ?
29. Are hoeing and weeding practised ? Name the crops in which it is either regularly or partially done, and how often the ground is cleaned in each ?
30. State what is considered a fair average return either in weight or bulk, of each description of produce, from every beegah, or other land measurement ?
31. If there is any customary classification of soils, describe it, and in what the peculiarities are said to consist ?
32. Is there any known remedy for the sterility of land covered with a white saline effervescence ? It is in some places diffused over large surfaces, which are called "Kulur" lands.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Kusum Nair, *Blossoms in the Dust : The Human Factor in Indian Development* (New York : Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), p. xxii.
2. *Ibid.* The developments in India since the mid-1960's need not concern this paper except to note that serious reservations have been expressed about the attempts to improve agricultural production primarily through new technological inputs which, it is assumed, the peasant will adopt because it is in his economic self-interest to do so. Kusum Nair, *The Lonely Furrow* (Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 1969), p. 213, notes that "there is little evidence of an invariable, instant and universal adoption of a new technique simply because it offered a 'dramatic increase' in yields and 'attractive economic

returns.'” The situation in West Pākistān appears to have been different and there has been widespread acceptance of new agricultural techniques. See Leslie Nulty, *The Green Revolution in West Pākistān : Implications of Technological Change* (New York : Praeger Publishers, 1972).

3. At a more general level the shortage of studies in agricultural history makes it difficult to discern the contours of basic, long-term agrarian change in South Asia. The English agricultural revolution climaxed in the 18th and 19th centuries largely through the maturing of long-term processes of change (much improved farming methods, increased farm acreage, the emergence of larger, consolidated farming units operating within an ownership and management system that encouraged capital investment and efficient operation) rooted in the 17th century or earlier. See J. D. Chambers and G. E. Mingay, *The Agricultural Revolution 1750-1880* (London : B. T. Batsford, Ltd., 1966) and G. E. Mingay, “The Agricultural Revolution in English History : A Reconsideration,” *Agricultural History*, XXVI (1963), pp. 123-33.

The point for South Asia is not that English agricultural history provides a model (it does not) but rather that the period of “revolutionary” agricultural change in England was well over a century long and that our still imperfect understanding of that change is based on much intensive research. Historians of South Asia lack both the research and the long-term perspective while the planners live in a world of “instant” technological solutions to India’s agricultural problems. On the last point see Kusum Nair, *The Lonely Furrow*, pp. 206-19.

There are a few recent works that hold promise for an improved understanding of agrarian change in 19th- and 20th-century India. Elizabeth Whitcombe’s *Agrarian Conditions in Northern India*, vol. I : *The United Provinces under British Rule, 1860-1900* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1972) is a fine study and, though necessarily strongly institutional, it does contain a good chapter on “The Development of Agricultural Resources” which includes problems of technical change. At a microscopic level the work of T. G. Kessinger on the intensive study of long-term change in one Punjab village will do much to improve our understanding of agrarian change at the level of the basic element, the peasant farmer. Perhaps Professor Kessinger will encourage historians of South Asia to emulate the fundamental achievements of the French *Annales* school. See T. G. Kessinger, “Historical Materials on Rural India,” *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, VII : 4 (December, 1970), pp. 489-510. George Blyn’s *Agricultural Trends in India, 1891-1947 : Output, Availability and Productivity* (Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966) must also be mentioned. It is a basic and pioneering work that will long be indispensable for any student of South Asia. Finally the work of Peter Harnetty and others on cotton cultivation and marketing must be mentioned as must John Hurd’s work on the relationship between the railways and the expansions of grain markets.

4. Contemporary echoes of this problem are found in D. R. Gadgil’s address to the Thirteenth Annual Conference of the Indian Society of Agricultural Statistics (Poonā : January 8, 1960). Gadgil noted that “there is relatively little

connection between research and its application in the field...in framing agricultural policies, Government and its experts operate with the results of experiments which they have never bothered to translate into practical application." Quoted in Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama*, vol. II (New York : Pantheon Books, 1968), p. 1291, n. 2.

5. Robert Wallace, *India in 1887* (Edinburgh : Oliver and Boyd, 1888), p. 316. In 1915 the famous agriculturist Harold H. Mann noted, in an address to the Indian Science Congress, that he knew of no case in the world where suggested improvement had so "uniformly failed." Mann attributed the failure to "the non-realization that Indian agriculture is something special, and that owing to differences of climate and conditions we have to work out our own problems here on the spot, and that few, if any, improvements can be transplanted bodily from any other country." "We must [Mann continued] then develop very careful study of Indian agriculture, not as a branch of what is being done in Europe or America, but with a view which looks out from the eyes of our Indian cultivators, which sees things from their point of view, surrounded by the difficulties which they know and feel are real. We must devote ourselves to solving the problems which they, the cultivators, place before us, and which they know are the hindrances in their way." Harold H. Mann, *The Social Framework of Agriculture*, ed. Daniel Thorner (New York : Augustus M. Kelley, 1967), pp. 252-53. Similar arguments are still being made today—see Kusum Nair, *The Lonely Furrow*.
6. Mann, *The Social Framework of Agriculture*, p. 249.
7. The Society did not end in 1871. It still existed in the late 1870's and may have terminated sometime in the 1880's. S. M. Latif, *Lāhore* (Lāhore : New Imperial Press, 1892), does not list the Society among the associations of the city.
8. The earliest societies located at Calcuttā and Bombay were founded in the 1820's. The missionary William Carey founded the Calcuttā-based Agricultural Society of India in 1820. See J. C. Marshman, *The Life and Times of Carey, Marshman and Ward*, vol. II (London, 1859), pp. 227-228.
9. D. R. Gadgil, *The Industrial Evolution of India* (4th ed., Calcuttā : Oxford University Press, 1942), p. 66. I do not understand the significance of 1866.
10. Henry Lawrence and Robert Montgomery need no introduction to this group (although we do need a monographic study of Montgomery's career). Battine commanded the cis-Jhelum division of the army. Henry Cope was one of the most fascinating and slippery members of the non-official British community in the central Punjāb. During his stay in the Punjāb (in the 1850's and 1860's), Cope held such positions as editor of the *Lāhore Chronicle*, a seed merchant and agriculturalist in the neighbourhood of Amritsar and an officiating assistant agent of the Punjāb Railway Company. Cope was an ardent promoter of various agriculture endeavours (flax, cotton, silk, etc.). William Kirke filled the important uncovenanted official post of superintendent of the Punjāb Board of Administration's English office.
11. Some of the five, however, were on civil employment as members of the Punjāb administration. As a non-regulation province in the 1850's the Punjāb utilized a large number of military officers in the civil administrative structure.

12. *Proceedings of the Agri-Horticultural Society of the Punjāb From 1st May to 31st December, 1851* (Lāhore : 1852), pp. 1-7.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-17. Dalhousie was heavily involved in the decision to annex the Punjāb to British India in 1849 and was therefore deeply interested in the success of the new province. Dalhousie kept a close watch on developments in the Punjāb throughout his Governor-Generalship, 1848-1856. See M. A. Rahim, *Lord Dalhousie's Administration of the Conquered and Annexed States* (Delhi : S. Chānd & Co., 1963), pp. 22-69; and Sir William Lee-Warner, *The Life of the Marquis of Dalhousie*, 2 vols. (London : Macmillan & Co., 1904).
14. *Proceedings from 1st May to 31st December, 1851*, pp. 110-17.
15. Reports of the Society's activities were published regularly in the *Lāhore Chronicle* and these reports sometimes contain membership lists and almost always indicate who was in attendance at a given meeting of the Society. There was, of course, a distinction between those active in the Society's affairs and the majority (judged by the short attendance lists) who were not active and who probably belonged out of duty or to receive the share of seeds that went to each subscribing member. Given the highly stratified, class-conscious nature of European society in India the absence of "lower-class" Europeans from the Society is not surprising. I am working on a detailed study of European society in the Lāhore District in the period 1849-1872. In the meantime an indication of some of the cleavages in European communities in India can be found in B. S. Cohn, "The British in Benares : A Nineteenth-Century Colonial Society," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, IV : 2 (January, 1962), pp. 169-99.
16. Compiled from *Proceedings from 1st May to 31st December, 1851*. The six Indians were Saiud Hadee Hoosain (Extra-Assistant, Goojrāt), Mahomed Buksh ( a Tahsildār ), Rājā Tej Sing, Rājā Deenānāth, Fukeer Noor-ood-deen and Mahārājā Nehāl Sing of Kapoorthulā. I leave the spellings of the names as they are given in the *Proceedings*.
17. Harsukh Rāi joined the Society in January, 1852, and was listed as "native secretary" in the *Proceedings* of the meeting of February 8, 1852. See the *Lāhore Chronicle*, January 22, 1852, p. 53 and February 19, 1852, p. 116. At the time Harsukh Rāi was editor of the Lāhore Urdū newspaper, the *Koh-i-Nūr*. Harsukh Rāi was convicted of an adultery charge in 1856. See the *Lāhore Chronicle*, March 8, 1856, p. 156 and March 12, 1856, p. 165.
18. *Lāhore Chronicle*, September 24, 1864, Supplement.
19. *Lāhore Chronicle*, June 23, 1866, p. 498.
20. *Ibid.*
21. National Archives of India. *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Punjāb, North-Western Provinces, Oudh and the Central Provinces*, 1873, pp. 346-47. *Koh-i-Nūr*, May 17, 1873.
22. Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, vol. LXXI : Pt. 2, 1881, "Report of the Indian Famine Commission," Appendix, vol. III : "Evidence in Reply to Inquiries of the Commission, Chapter I—Conditions of the Country and People," p. 182. (Hereafter cited as Famine Commission).
23. *Indian Public Opinion and Punjāb Times*, May 28, 1872, p. 1193.
24. Famine Commission, p. 182.

25. Famine Commission, p. 182, refers to the Society as being "nominally independent of Government." The power of Government over the Society was nakedly revealed in 1856 when the Secretary, Cope, was involved and held to be culpable (though never formally tried) in a case of missing jewellery. The Punjāb Government states: "Mr Cope has heretofore been the paid secretary of the Agri-Horticultural Society of the Punjāb. He has just resigned that post. Had he not done so, the officiating Chief Commissioner would have thought it his duty to move the Society to remove Mr Cope from that office, the Government being a liberal supporter of the Society and its operations." National Archives of India, Political Department, Foreign Proceedings, July 4, 1856, no. 216.
26. Sir Donald McLeod, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjāb from 1865-1870, was a particularly active member and officer of the Society during the entire period 1851-1870. See Major-General Edward Lake, *Sir Donald McLeod, A Record of Forty-two Years' Service in India* (London: The Religious Tract Society) esp. p. 121. The other vice-president was usually a high-ranking military officer.
27. Quoted in the *Lāhore Chronicle*, March 18, 1854, p. 171.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.* You will note that the *Friend of India* writer states that the Society had more success enlisting the cooperation of Indians than I indicated earlier in the paper. My reading of the *Proceedings* of the Society leads me to believe the *Friend* writer exaggerated but I do concede that in the period 1852-54 the participation of Indians was *somewhat* greater than in the period 1860-1866.
30. *Lāhore Chronicle*, March 21, 1860, p. 179. The "propriety of maintaining an ornamental garden for the recreation of the residents of Lāhore, out of funds partly subscribed by members residing at distant stations" was questioned in 1864. It was decided that, although the expenditure was small the principle was wrong and that the Society should therefore "confine its operations to its legitimate business," *Lāhore Chronicle*, March 30, 1864, p. 228. The result was that the Society transferred the more ornamental portion of its garden to the Local Fund Committee. See *Lāhore Chronicle*, April 29, 1865, Supplement.
31. *Proceedings from 1st May to 31st December, 1851*, p. 16.
32. *Lāhore Chronicle*, March 30, 1853, p. 206. Lawrence also suggested that Cope be paid for his work as secretary—a suggestion accepted by the Society who established a monthly salary of Rs. 100. From 1853 through 1871 (with the exception of 1857-1860) the Society paid its secretary a monthly salary. The salary was Rs. 200 a month in late 1860's.
33. *Lāhore Chronicle*, January 10, 1857, p. 21. It is an interesting commentary on the Society's priorities at that time that the ornamental garden was maintained.
34. *Lāhore Chronicle*, April 6, 1859, p. 219. Between early 1857 and early 1859 the Society paid off debts totalling Rs. 9016. Even in 1861, however, expenditure was exceeding income. See *Lāhore Chronicle*, April 10, 1861, p. 141.
35. Donald F. McLeod (at the time Financial Commissioner of the Punjāb) wrote a letter to the editor of the *Lāhore Chronicle* in 1859 stating that Society is "at present in great straits from want of a secretary." McLeod states: "In Mr Cope's time an extensive correspondence was kept up with persons in all parts of the country interested in Agricultural and Horticultural enquiries, meetings were

held with tolerable frequency and regularity . . . proceedings of the meetings were then published in the local newspaper, by which means . . . a constant interest was kept up . . . and great and constantly increasing good was effected." McLeod noted that the secretary needed to be a man of business with powers of superintendence and organization and the leisure to keep up an active correspondence and to publicize the Society's activities. The members of the civil service, McLeod felt, did not have the necessary leisure so the secretary would have to come from other segments of the Lāhore European community. *Lāhore Chronicle*, April, 1859, p. 219. The discontinuance of the secretary's monthly stipend back in 1856 may have had something to do with the rapid turn-over of secretaries.

36. The Mutiny undoubtedly contributed to the difficulties of the Society in 1857 and early 1858.
37. *Lāhore Chronicle*, June 18, 1859, p. 391.
38. *Lāhore Chronicle*, March 21, 1860, p. 179.
39. "But such were the general apathy and want of confidence in the Society then prevailing that this gentleman's [Brown's] zeal and ability would certainly not have sufficed to attain the desired results, but for the personal interest taken in the matter by His Honor, the Lieutenant-Governor, and the steady support, official and extra-official, which he has uniformly afforded." Copy of a letter from D.F. McLeod, Financial Commissioner, Punjāb, to the Secretary to Government, Punjāb, dated May 7, 1863, *Lāhore Chronicle*, October 21, 1863, Supplement.
40. Brown reported at a Society meeting on December 23, 1863, that when he assumed office the Society owed Rs. 3000 but now it had a surplus of Rs. 2000. *Lāhore Chronicle*, December 27, 1862, p. 882.
41. The proposal for Cope's return was put forward (somewhat gingerly) by the Society's President, D. F. McLeod, in December, 1862, accepted by Cope in early 1866. Cope received his old stipend of Rs. 100 per month. See *Lāhore Chronicle*, December 27, 1862, pp. 828-29, and the *Lāhore Chronicle*, January 21, 1863, p. 46.
42. Cope resigned the position in March, 1864, "on account of his press of occupation." *Lāhore Chronicle*, March 16, 1864, p. 198.
43. As noted earlier in the paper, there was also an effort to involve more Indians in the Society during this period.
44. This finally appeared after many delays and changes of editor in 1868. See *Select Papers of the Agri-Horticultural Society of the Punjāb from Its Commencement to 1862* (Lāhore : 1868).
45. *Lāhore Chronicle*, October 21, 1863, Supplement.
46. "Annual Report of the Punjāb Agri-Horticultural Society from May 1865 to 1866," *Lāhore Chronicle*, June 23, 1866, p. 497. The total number of members was given as 220, though the paying members numbered fewer than 200.
47. *Lāhore Chronicle*, June 23, 1866, p. 498 ; March 9, 1867, p. 207 ; and March 30, 1867, p. 269.
48. *Lāhore Chronicle*, January 22, 1868, p. 76.
49. *Indian Public Opinion and Punjāb Times*, May 21, 1872, p. 1132. When Cope resigned in 1864 as general secretary, Dr Brown and Dr Stewart served as joint

secretaries. In April 1865, Dr Henderson was elected a joint secretary and later in 1865 Henderson appears to have assumed all the secretarial duties. When it was rumoured that Henderson was slated for transfer from Lāhore, the *Lāhore Chronicle*, November 17, 1866, p. 780, observed: "It is not too much to say that the Society would have sunk long ago into that slough of despond to which most similar institutions are condemned in India, had it not been for Dr Henderson's unwearied care and attention." Though the language may be overstated, the excessive reliance of the Society on a key individual is again emphasized. Henderson was transferred in late 1877 and Dr Brown again became secretary. One gets the impression that Brown was less effective in the position and this perhaps contributed to the Society's need for a stirring-up.

50. *Proceedings of the Society from 1st May to 31st December, 1851*, pp. 2-3.
51. *Lāhore Chronicle*, September 21, 1864, Supplement.
52. This material often reflected the enthusiasm of Henry Cope. Much ancillary information of interest to the historian was collected as part of this material, e.g. an account of the silk manufactures of Lāhore written by Cope in 1852. See *Select Papers*, pp. 190-210.
53. Tremenheere (sometimes spelt Tremenhere) was a Superintending Engineer.
54. Lt-Colonel G. B. Tremenheere, "On the Present State of Agriculture in the Punjāb," *Select Papers*, pp. 61-67.
55. Published in the *Proceedings* and in the *Select Papers*.
56. The extent to which this was done varied, of course, from period to period depending on the health of the Society.
57. The accuracy and utility of the material disseminated by the Society was severely questioned by Francis Halsey in a letter to the editor in May, 1872. He wrote: "I should be glad to know the name of one single plant introduced by the Society since its foundation which has given any practical result or return to the Province—as it is, if the scientific knowledge as published in the newspapers is what is to guide us, harm rather than good has been done by it—as, in most instances, the information has been simply incorrect and unreliable." *Indian Public Opinion and Punjāb Times*, May 12, 1872, p. 1136. Halsey's opinion carries authority because he was a successful farmer in Gurdāspur District. On Halsey's activities, see Famine Commission, pp. 177-82.
58. *Lāhore Chronicle*, June 18, 1859, pp. 390-91.
59. "Report of the Agri-Horticultural Society of the Punjāb for the year 1869-70," *Indian Public Opinion and Punjāb Times*, May 24, 1870, p. 1041.
60. Famine Commission, p. 177.
61. "Technical change in agriculture is directed at the resources available for cultivation, at methods of production, and at the organization of production. These three factors are interrelated, and whether we deal with water-control, the improvement of land or seed or livestock, basic to all is the work of man, his division of labour, his groupings, his traditional procedures, his relationship to the land. His survival, and often also the reason why he wants to survive, depend on these. He will be the instrument of change; and all change, even in techniques and tools used, will affect his way of life and his relations with others." Margaret Mead (ed.), *Cultural Patterns and Technical Change* (New York: New American

Library, Mentor Book, 1955), p. 177.

62. Famine Commission, pp. 177-82.

63. *Ibid.* The efforts to extend and improve flax cultivation date back to the very start of the Society: Much effort was extended and for five years, 1860-1865, a Belfast flax company attempted to grow the crop primarily in the Siālkot District but eventually the effort was pretty much given up. The one real success, the introduction of tea plantations in Kāngrā, was accomplished without much involvement by the Society and was largely the work of private entrepreneurs.

64. *Ibid.*

65. *Proceedings from 1st May to 31st December, 1851*, pp. 47-49, 125-29.

66. *Ibid.*

67. Famine Commission, pp. 179-80.

68. An interesting article that discusses other similar situations in 19th-century India is Sabyasāchi Bhāṭṭāchārya, "Cultural and Social Constraints on Technological Innovation and Economic Development: Some Case Studies," *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, III : 3 (September, 1966), pp. 240-67.

69. *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers, 1873*, pp. 346-47.



## ORIGINS OF THE SINGH SABHĀ

HARBANS SINGH

In the history of Sikhism, the hundred years beginning from 1873 are dominated by one single motivation—that is of search for identity and self-assertion. The entire period can be interpreted and understood in terms of this central concern. Under this impulse new powers of regeneration came into effect and Sikhism was reclaimed from a state of utter ossification and inertia. Its moral force and dynamic vitality were re-discovered. The Sikh mind was stirred by a process of liberation and it began to look upon its history and tradition with a clear, self-discerning eye. What had become effete and decrepit and what was reckoned to be against the Gurūs' teachings was rejected. The purity of Sikh precept and practice was sought to be restored. Rites and customs considered consistent with the Sikh doctrine and tradition were re-established. For some, legal sanction was secured through government legislation. With the reform of Sikh ceremonial and observances came the reformation of the Sikh shrines which, again, was clinched by a unique display of communal unity and fervour and by eventual legal sanction secured from the Government of the day. This period of fecundation of the spirit and of modern development also witnessed the emergence of new cultural and political aspirations. Literary and educational processes were renovated. Through a strong political platform, the Sikhs sought to secure recognition. The process reached its culmination in the recent formulations for a Punjābī-speaking state.

Concretely, the starting point was 1873 when a few far-seeing Sikhs assembled in Amritsar and formed a society with the simple, unostentatious name of Srī Gurū Singh Sabhā.

### II

An English newspaper writes that the Christian faith is making rapid progress and makes the prophecy, that within the next twenty-five years, one-third of the Mājāhā area would be Christian. The

Mālwa will follow suit. Just as we do not see any Buddhists in the country except in images, in the same fashion the Sikhs, who are now, here and there, visible in their turbans and their other religious forms like wrist-bangles and swords, will be seen only in pictures in museums. Their own sons and grandsons turning Christians and clad in coat and trousers and sporting mushroom-like caps will go to see them in the museums and say in their pidgin Punjābī : Look, that is the picture of a Sikh—the tribe that inhabited this country once upon a time. Efforts of those who wish to resist the onslaught of Christianity are feeble and will prove abortive like a leper without hands and feet trying to save a boy falling off a rooftop.

This was a note which appeared in the *Khālsā Akhbār* of Lāhore, May 25, 1894, from the pen of its editor Giānī Dīt Singh.

Reporting the observance of the first anniversary of the Lāhore Singh Sabhā in its issue for April 22, 1905, the *Khālsā Advocate* of Amrītsar referred to the occupant of a *bungā* in the precincts of the Tarn Tāran Gurdwārā who had embraced Christianity and hung a cross on a wall of it turning it thereby into a chapel.

A student by the name of Bīr Singh contributed a letter to the *Khālsā Akhbār*, February 12, 1897, saying :

Near the Dukhbhanjanī *berī* tree [in the Golden Temple precincts] there is a room on the front wall of which is painted a picture. The picture depicts a goddess and Gurū Gobind Singh. The goddess stands on golden sandals and she has many hands—ten or, perhaps, twenty. One of the hands is stretched out and in this she holds a *khandā*. Gurū Gobind Singh stands barefoot in front of it, with his hands folded.

A letter in the *Khālsā Akhbār*, October 8, 1897, reported :

On Tuesday, Bhādon 31 (September 14, 1897), the *Pujārīs* of the Tarn Tāran Gurdwārā held the *sharādhā* ceremony in honour of Gurū Arjun. Those feasted were from outside the faith and they smoked.

The *Khālsā Akhbār*, July 13, 1894, carried this letter in its correspondence columns :

In the village of Nattā, in Nābhā state, a Sikh married off his daughter according to *Gur-maryādā*. Most of the population in the village, including Brāhmanical Hindūs and some Sikhs, became hostile. They did not let the marriage party stay in the *dharamsālā*.

The host, firm in his faith, had to put up the wedding guests in his own house.

A correspondent's letter in the *Khālsā Samāchār* of Amritsar, edited by Bhāi Vīr Singh, dated June 25, 1902, said :

Around the village of Singhpur the Christians and the Muham-madis are becoming very influential. The former have two churches here and the latter two mosques. In this area there is no *dharamsālā* and the rural Khālsā is rather neglectful of its religious duty.

These quotations from the earliest newspapers started by the Sikhs reveal the nature of the identity crisis Sikhism then faced. They refer to some of the fundamental deficiencies of Sikh society and the challenges a fast-changing environment had created. Audible here are also the intimations of the Singh Sabhā awakening then moving the hearts of large numbers of Sikhs in the Punjāb and outside.

An editorial in the *Khālsā Advocate*, December 15, 1904, thus summed up the situation which existed before the emergence of the Singh Sabhā :

... false *gurūs* grew up in great abundance whose only business was to fleece their flock and pamper their own self-aggrandizement. Properly speaking, there was no Sikhism. Belief in the Gurūs was gone. The idea of brotherhood in the *Panth* was discarded. The title of 'Bhāi,' so much honoured by Sikhs of old, fell into disuse and contempt. Sikhs grovelled in superstition and idolatry ... It [Sikhism] had thus lost all that was good and life-giving in the faith.

From what decadent state the Singh Sabhā had salvaged Sikhism will be apparent from this following single instance. Before the movement had got well under way, the powerful Singh Sabhā editor, Giānī Dit Singh, who met the raging polemics against the Sikhs with extraordinary literary and scholarly resource and who was one of the leading lights of the reformation, had to withdraw himself from the Sikh congregation at the time of the distribution of *karāhprasād*. The reason was that he came of a so-called low-caste family.<sup>1</sup>

### III

The decline had started in the very heyday of Sikh power. In the courtly splendour of the days of Mahārājā Ranjīt Singh, the Sikh way of life became subverted. The faith was weakened by the influx of large numbers of those who had adopted the Sikh form to gain worldly

advantage, but whose allegiance to its principles and traditions was tentative. In the words of a character in one of Sir Jogendra Singh's novels in English : "We failed because we did not obey the Gurū. People established kingdoms and principalities and neglected their poor brethren. The result is what you see—the Khālsā has fallen." But the character is aware of the massive reformation that was taking place. He says : "Sikhism is now casting off external influences and returning to the solid rock of its own pure faith and divine teachings."<sup>2</sup>

A protest against the rot that had set in was registered long before the Singh Sabhā came into being. Bābā Dayāl, a saintly man, contemporary of Mahārājā Ranjīt Singh, had cavilled at the shortcomings of the mighty and assailed the rites and observances undermining the Sikh faith. His main target was the worship of images against which he preached vigorously. He re-emphasized the Sikh belief in *Nirankār*—the Formless One. From this the movement he had started came to be known as the Nirankārī movement.

For early Christian missionaries it was an interesting development. As a report says :

Sometime in the summer we heard of a movement among the Hindūs of Rāwalpindī, which, from the representations we received, seemed to indicate a state of mind favourable to the reception of truth. It was deemed expedient to visit them, to ascertain the true nature of the movement and, if possible, to give it a proper direction. On investigation, however, it was found that the whole movement was the result of the efforts of an individual to establish a new *panth* (religious sect) of which he should be the instructor and guide. The sect has been in existence eight or nine years, but during the Sikh reign fear kept them quiet; since the extension of the Company's Government over the country, they have become more bold, and with the assistance of our religious publications to furnish them with arguments against idolatry, they have attacked the faith of the Hindūs most fiercely. They professedly reject idolatry, and all reverence and respect for whatever is held sacred by Sikhs or Hindūs, except Nānak and his *Granth*. The Hindūs complain that they even give abuse to the cow. This climax of impiety could not be endured. It was followed by some street disturbances, which brought the parties into the civil courts. They are called Nirankārīs, from their belief in God, as a spirit without bodily form. The next great fundamental principle of their religion is that

salvation is to be obtained by meditation on God. They regard Nānak as their saviour, inasmuch as he taught them the way of salvation. Of their peculiar practices only two things are learned. First, they assemble every morning for worship, which consists of bowing the head to the ground, before the *Granth*, making offerings, and in hearing the *Granth* read by one of their numbers, and explained also if their leader be present. Secondly, they do not burn their dead, because that would assimilate them to the Hindūs; nor bury them, because that would make them too much like Christians and Musalmāns, but throw them into the river.<sup>3</sup>

The Nirankārī and the more actively protestant Nāmdhārī movement which followed it had but limited impact. What touched Sikhism to its very roots and made it a living force once again was the Singh Sabhā reformation. Unlike other Indian reform movements of the period which were the creation of outstanding individual leaders, the Singh Sabhā was a mass upsurge. There were three factors mainly responsible for it—an awareness born of the general awakening in the atmosphere that Sikhism as commonly practised was a corruption of what it originally was, a reaction to what was happening in the neighbourly religious traditions and defensiveness generated by Christian proselytization and the *odium theologicum* started by some Hindū critics.

#### IV

The challenge of Christian proselytization came with the advent of the British. Even when Ranjit Singh, the Sikh sovereign, still reigned in Lāhore, a Presbyterian minister, John C. Lowrie, had arrived from America in 1834 to set up a mission at Ludhiānā, the north-western British outpost near the Sikh frontier. The factors for the choice of this area as “the best field of labour” were its “numerous and hardy population...a better climate than the lower provinces, and...a ready access to the lower ranges of the Himālaya mountains in case of the failure of health.” An additional reason was “the Sikh people to whom our attention at first was specially directed.”<sup>4</sup>

Besides preaching the Gospel, the mission ran an English school and a printing press. The school was an innovation in this part of the country—a novelty both in its composition and curriculum. Mahārājā Ranjit Singh had himself wanted to have an English school established in

his capital for the education of the children of his family and other promising young men. He had Lowrie visit Lāhore for this purpose. The school might have materialized, but "the missionary principle of teaching the Gospel in connection with literature and science was unacceptable to the Mahārājā."<sup>5</sup>

With the abrogation of Sikh rule in 1849, the Mission extended its work to Lāhore. Two of its members, C. W. Forman and John Newton, were set apart for this duty and sent to the Punjāb capital immediately. English and vernacular schools as well as welfare institutions like hospitals and orphanages followed. C. W. Forman turned out regularly for bāzār preaching. One day he received a challenge to a public debate with a Muslim theologian which he accepted. Six subjects were fixed for discussion and the issue joined with zeal from both sides. This event (1862) might well have been a precursor to disputations between spokesmen of different faiths which overtook Punjāb at the turn of the century.

Amritsar, the headquarters of the Sikh religion, became another important seat of Church enterprise. In 1852, T. H. Fitzpatrick and Robert Clark, the first missionaries of the Church of England appointed to the Punjāb, arrived in station. In the valedictory instructions given them, they had been told : "Though the Brāhman religion still sways the minds of a large proportion of the population of the Punjāb, and the Mohammedan of another, the dominant religion and power for the last century has been the Sikh religion, a species of pure theism, formed in the first instance by a dissenting sect from Hindūism. A few hopeful instances lead us to believe that the Sikhs may prove more accessible to scriptural truth than the Hindūs and Mohammedans..."<sup>6</sup>

The English missionaries were joined by Dāud Singh, recorded to be the first Sikh ever to have embraced Christianity. He had been baptized in Cāwnpore (Kānpur) by the Rev W. H. Perkins, and was transferred to Amritsar as a pastor in 1852. Two Mission houses were built in the city by the Deputy Commissioner. Construction of the station church was started. In the wake of the Mission came a vernacular school, a high school, a school for girls and a midwifery hospital. The evangelizing work was rewarded with the conversion of men like Shamaun, i.e. Simeon, a Sikh *granthī* (reader of the Holy Book or priest), formerly Kesar Singh of Sultānwind, Imām-ud-Dīn, a Muslim *maulavī*, and Rullīā Rām of a Hindū Khatrī family in Amritsar who had attended the Mission School and passed the Calcuttā Entrance examination. Substations of the Mission were opened in important towns of the Sikh tract

of Mājā such as Tarn Tāran, Ajnālā and Jandiālā.

The United Presbyterian Mission which began its work in Siālkot in 1855 met with special success. The conversion of Ditt, "a dark, lame, little man," of the sweeper class from Marāli village was the forerunner of what has been called "the mass movement." "In the eleventh year after Ditt's conversion more than five hundred *chūhrās* (outcaste scavengers) were received into the Church. By 1900 more than half of these lowly people in Siālkot district had been converted, and by 1915 all but a few hundred members of the caste professed the Christian faith."

Other societies, notably the Cambridge Mission, the Baptist Mission and the Church of Scotland, entered the field and the network soon covered the entire country, including the frontier areas. A catalyst had entered Punjābi life which precipitated a vital reaction.

The challenge of western science and Christian ethics and humanitarianism provoked self-examination and reinterpretation in Indian religions. The result was a wide movement of reformation which took pronouncedly sectarian forms in the Ārya Samāj fundamentalism in Hindūism and Ahmadiyah heresy in Islām. The more liberal expressions were the Brahma Sabhā, later known as Brahma Samāj, founded by Rājā Rām-mohun Roy in Bengāl in 1828, the Prārthanā Sabhā which began in Bombay in 1867 and the teachings of Rāmakrishna Paramahansa (1834-86). The encounter in the Punjāb was marked by aggressiveness and acerbity and the last decades of the nineteenth century were filled with abrasive religious polemic in which the Christians, Muslims and Ārya Samājists freely participated.

For Sikhism, strangely somnolent since the forfeiture of political authority, this was a critical time. Challenged by the religious and cultural forces around it, it was set on a course of self-understanding. The formalism and ceremonial which had accumulated during the days of princely power were recognized as accretions and adulterations contrary to the teachings of the Gurūs. Survival was linked with the expunction of these abuses and the recovery of purity in belief and usage. Such had been the dereliction of the faith that, after occupation of the Punjāb, several of the British observers prognosticated dismally for it. Some thought it was already dead; others, that it awaited an inevitable doom.

In 1853, Mahārājā Duleep Singh, the last Sikh ruler of the Punjāb, who had come under British tutelage at the tender age of eight, accepted the Christian faith—a conversion hailed as "the first instance of the accession of an Indian prince to the communion of the Church."<sup>8</sup>

Duleep Singh made liberal donations out of his allowance for Christian charity and the maintenance of mission schools. The Sikh Rājā of Kapūrthalā invited the Ludhiānā Mission to set up a station in his capital and provided funds for its maintenance. "Until the Rājā of Kapūrthalā invited missionaries to his capital, no instance had occurred in India, in which the progress of the Gospel had been fostered by a ruler."<sup>9</sup> A few years later, the Kapūrthalā Rājā's nephew, Kanwar Harnām Singh, became a Christian. The Gospel was preached in the neighbourhood of the Golden Temple. For this purpose one of the surrounding *bungās*, or pilgrims' inns, had been acquired on rent.

## V

In the beginning of 1873, four Sikh pupils of the Amritsar Mission School proclaimed their intention of renouncing their faith in favour of Christianity. This shocked Sikh feeling. Added to this was a series of carping lectures in Amritsar on the Sikh faith and the narration of Gurū Nānak's life in deliberately garbled detail by Shraddhā Rām Phillaurī who had been engaged by the British to write a history of their faith. To consider these matters some prominent Sikhs, including Thākur Singh Sandhānwālīā, Bābā Sir Khem Singh Bedī, a descendant of Gurū Nānak, and Kanwar Bikramā Singh of Kapūrthalā, convened a meeting in Amritsar in 1873.<sup>10</sup> As a result of their deliberations, an association called Singh Sabhā was established. The Sabhā undertook to (i) restore Sikhism to its pristine purity; (ii) edit and publish historical and religious books; (iii) propagate current knowledge, using Punjābī as the medium, and to start magazines and newspapers in Punjābī; (iv) reform and bring back into the Sikh fold the apostates; and (v) interest the highly placed Englishmen in, and ensure their association with, the educational programme of the Sikhs.

The Singh Sabhā gained quick support of the literate sections of the community and many Sikh scholars and leaders volunteered to join its ranks. A vigorous campaign was set afoot. Two of its major thrusts were the depreciation of un-Sikh customs and social evils, and the encouragement of western education. Progressive concern was pronounced as the revivalist impulse. Supporters of the Singh Sabhā initially met with strong opposition, especially in the villages. They were scorned and ridiculed for their so-called novel ideas. An epigrammatic couplet satirizing their new-fangled enthusiasm has become part of



Punjābī folklore :

When the barn is emptied of grain,

What better can you do than turn a Singh Sabhā ?

More mordant in humour was the villagers' deliberate corruption of the name of the movement from Singh Sabhā to *Singh Safā*, the word "safā" signifying widespread destruction caused by the plague epidemic of 1902.<sup>11</sup>

The reformist ideology percolated to the Sikh peasantry primarily through soldiers serving in the army or those who had retired. One of the regiments had constituted a choir of reciters to go round the villages and sing the sacred hymns at Singh Sabhā congregations. The movement picked momentum and rocked the Punjāb from one end to the other. Besides the religious and social reform, it brought fresh leaven to the intellectual and cultural life of the region.

To quote from *The Heritage of the Sikhs* : "For the Sikhs the Singh Sabhā was a great regenerating force. It articulated the inner urge of Sikhism for reform and gave it a decisive direction at a crucial moment of its history quickening its latent sources of energy. A comparison between the state of Sikhism before the Singh Sabhā and since will reveal the extent of its moral effect. The Sikh faith had waned incredibly before the first stirrings of the movement were felt. A sense of lassitude pervaded Sikh society which had sunk back into the priest-ridden debilitating cults, antithetical to Sikh monotheism. The teaching of the Gurūs had been forgotten and the Holy *Granth*, confined to the *gurdwārā* and the *dharamsālā*, had become the concern only of the *bhāt* and the *granthī*. From this condition the Singh Sabhā rescued the Sikhs, awakening in them a new awareness of their faith. The Singh Sabhā touched the very base, the mainsprings of the Sikh life and resuscitated the essential content of Sikh belief and exercise. It enhanced the intellectual capacity of the Sikhs and restored to them their creedal unity and their religious conscience. It opened for them the doors of modern progress and endowed them with the strength and adaptability to match the pressures created by new trends in man's thinking. The momentum which the Singh Sabhā gave to the Sikh renaissance still continues."<sup>12</sup>

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

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3. *Annual Report of the Lodiānā Mission*, Ludhiānā, 1853, pp. 22-23.
4. John C. Lowrie, *Travels in North India*, Philadelphia, Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1842, p. 41.
5. *Historical Sketches of the Indian Missions*, Allāhābād, 1886, p. 27.
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7. J. Waskom Pickett, *The Mass Movement*, the Abingdon Press, Cincinnati, p. 45.
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9. *Annual Report of the Lodiānā Mission*, Ludhiānā, 1862, p. 51.
10. See Jagjīt Singh, *Singh Sabhā Lahir*, Amritsar, pp. 11-13.
11. Giānī Nāhar Singh, 'Singh Sabhā Gujjarwāl' in *Grewāl Itihās*, 1970, pp. 114-15.
12. Harbans Singh, *The Heritage of the Sikhs*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, pp. 146-47.

## THE GROWTH OF THE RAILWAY SYSTEM IN THE PUNJĀB

G. S. KHOSLA

The description of the growth of railway system in the following pages covers the areas which, at one time, formed part of the land of the five rivers, namely the territories of the Haryānā and the Himāchal Pradesh and to some extent the province of Punjāb in Pākistān.

It is interesting to note in this context that the very first railway line which was laid in this territory now transcends the present-day political boundaries and its two parts lie in India and Pākistān. The section between Lāhore and Amritsar, which many readers of these pages must have covered hundreds of times, was built in 1861—115 years ago, and was opened to traffic on April 10, 1862. As one talks of political boundaries between sovereign States one has to be meticulous about distances and mileages. The distance by rail between Amritsar and Attārī, the last railway station on India's boundary with Pākistān, is 17.09 miles and that from Attārī to the boundary 0.82 mile, making a total of 17.91 miles within Indian territory.

The distance of 0.82 mile from Attārī to the boundary raises nostalgic memories which I would like to share with the readers. It was sometime in 1948, about a year after the partition of the country, that I happened to be in Amritsar to sort out some problems relating to rail traffic and customs arrangements in collaboration with my friend Indarjit Singh who was then Collector of Customs. I hitched on my small rickety 4-wheeler inspection carriage to a railway locomotive and we started from Attārī with the object of inspecting the line up to the boundary. As things on the border were still in a very unsettled state and no firm procedure had been laid down for crossing from one territory to the other, both having been part of the same country not a long while before, we felt concerned as the engine did not come to a halt at the appointed spot, that is the boundary between India and Pākistān. I suggested to Indarjit Singh not to put his head out for the obvious reason that we did not want to arouse suspicion. I, however, looked out of the window to attract the attention of the driver. And what did I see? There was a gang of Muslim permanentwaymen standing by the side of

the track in a respectful posture. I could see from their turbans that they were *arāins* who in that part of the country were generally recruited as gangmen. They thought that one of their own officers was doing a routine inspection and stood back from the track in a line according to established custom to offer their respects which I was quick to acknowledge. After moving a few yards I asked the driver to backtrack before we were shot at or apprehended. We were anxious to get out of the Pākistān territory as quickly as possible and also to find for ourselves as to how far we had moved into it. On the way back we kept our eyes glued to the berm to locate the boundary post which was supposed to have been there. We did ultimately discover it, hidden inside a bush which had spread around it. Little could have the builders of this line, 115 years before, realized that it was going to be the scene of so much turmoil and excitement.

The line from Attārī to Ambālā Cantt was built progressively during the following eight years between 1862 and 1870. The phasing of the construction did not obey the law of continuity. While the section between Ambālā Cantt and Ludhiānā had been opened on October 12, 1869, and that between Jullundur Cantt and Beās on November 15, 1869, the gap between Ludhiānā and Jullundur Cantt was not filled till a year later.

The next line to be built in the Punjāb was between Rājpurā and Patiālā, opened to traffic on November 1, 1884, and extended to Bhatindā, five years later, on October 13, 1889. This 108-mile long line built on 5' 6" gauge, popularly known as the broad gauge, on which bulk of the rail construction in this territory took place, was the property of the Patiālā Darbār but managed and worked by the Government through the agency of the North-Western Railway. The land for the original construction was provided free of cost by the Patiālā Dārbār. For the purpose of working, the North-Western Railway made it a part of its system in 1889.

At about the same time, the Amritsar-Pathānkot broad-gauge line was under construction and the first part Amritsar-Dīnānagar, a length of 51.04 miles, was opened to traffic on New Year Day in 1884 and the balance Dīnānagar-Pathānkot, 15.48 miles, on June 18 the same year.

The Indian states in the Punjāb, then known as native states as in the rest of the country, took a leading part in the construction of railways. In what is now Punjāb, Patiālā, Mālerkotlā and Jīnd interested themselves in the schemes of railway extension during the nineteenth century.

The same was the case with Jammū and Kashmīr state. So we find that the line between Jammū and Siālkot (now in Pākistān) was opened to traffic on March 15, 1890. The section within the Jammū and Kashmīr territory was constructed with funds supplied by the Kashmīr Darbār whose property it was, but it was managed and worked through the agency of North-Western Railway. It is interesting to note that for management, maintenance, provision of rolling stock and working the North-Western Railway retained 55.5 per cent of the gross earnings of the section, the remaining 44.5 per cent being credited to the Kashmīr Darbār.

That part of the railway network which even till date is known as SPR (Southern Punjāb Railway) was also completed in the nineteenth century. The section between Rāiwind (now in Pākistān) and Bhatindā was built between 1883 and 1899. Construction started from Rāiwind with the opening of Rāiwind-Kasūr (now in Pākistān) section on April 15, 1883, and progressed up to Hussainīwālā by December 15, 1883. We then find that the two-mile section between Ferozepore City and Ferozepore Cantt was completed on October 1, 1888, but Hussainīwālā was not linked to Ferozepore City till October 1, 1892, obviously due to the fact that the construction of a major bridge was involved.

The rest of the SPR main line up to Delhī was opened to traffic on November 10, 1897. Eastward from Bhatindā the line at present extends to Hindūmalkot in Indian territory but it was originally built right up to Samāsātā (in the old Bahāwalpur state) which is an important station on the Lāhore-Karāchī route in Pākistān. The whole of this system from Rāiwind to Delhī and from Bhatindā to Samāsātā with branches built from time to time such as Ferozepore-Jullundur and Ferozepore-Ludhiānā in India and Kasūr-Pākpattan and Lodhrān-Mailsī in Pākistān was the property of the Southern Punjāb Railway Company. Delhī-Bhatindā-Samāsātā route has been popularly known as the SPR, a phrase which is still common parlance in the railway control offices in Ferozepore and Delhī which control the train services on the main line.

The Delhī-Umbālā-Kālkā Railway was part of the East Indian Railway system at the time of its opening on March 1, 1891. An interesting fact about this line is that it was fenced throughout which, though the common rule in Great Britain from where the first builders of railways in India hailed, was an exception in this country. This was also one of the first lines to be built in this part of the country with a sharp

gradient of 1 in 40 over a distance of 15 miles from Kālkā. According to various agreements between the Secretary of State for India in London and the Delhī-Umbālā-Kālkā Railway Company, Government guaranteed interest at the rate of  $3\frac{1}{4}$  per cent on capital. The line was thus built like so many others in India under what has been generally known as the Old Guarantee System.

The North-Western Railway came into existence in 1886 as a result of the merger of five separate railway companies when the old Sind Punjāb and Delhī Guaranteed Company, registered in 1855, was taken over from January 1, 1886, and amalgamated with the Punjāb Northern, the Indus Valley, the Eastern section of Sind-Sāgar and the Southern section of Sind-Pishin State Railways. By 1952, the North-Western Railway had constructed a total of 2,000 miles of branch and feeder lines to serve the rich agricultural districts of the North.

The construction of a railway line to serve the great historical centre of pilgrimage, Kurukshetra, had started before the turn of the century and the Narwānā-Kaithal section, 23.56 miles, was opened to traffic on February 1, 1899. There was a long period of inactivity after that until 1910 when the remaining portion between Kaithal and Kurukshetra, 29.76 miles, was opened to traffic on December 1 of that year.

The 78.58-mile Ludhiānā-Jākhāl line via Dhūrī was the first line in the Punjāb to be opened to traffic at the dawn of the twentieth century. The Government constructed the line from funds supplied in the ratio of  $\frac{4}{5}$ ths and  $\frac{1}{5}$ th respectively by the princes of Jīnd and Mālerkotlā who owned it according to an agreement, dated September 6, 1899, between the Secretary of State and the two Darbārs. Under this agreement, land was provided free of cost by the Government in the case of the British territory, and by the two Darbārs in the case of princely territory. After the opening of the line in 1901 its working and management were taken over by the North-Western Railway.

The Ludhiānā-Ferozepore Cantt line (77 miles) was also built early in the twentieth century. This was but natural as the line serves a territory rich in agriculture and trade. By 1905, the line had already been opened to traffic. In the following year, Ferozepore City-McLeod Ganj Road line was opened. While McLeod Ganj Road lies on the side of Pākistān, Fāzilkā is on the Indian side. The total length of this line from Ferozepore City to the boundary is 61.09 miles.

Also in 1906 a line from Amritsar to Pattī was put into use and four years later the stretch from Pattī to Kasūr (now in Pākistān) was

completed. A company by the name of Amritsar-Patti Railway Company had been floated for this purpose. While the line was the property of this Company, the construction was entrusted to the Government of India and it was worked and managed through the agency of North-Western Railway. The present boundary between India and Pākistān on this line is at a distance of 2.05 miles from Khemkaran.

A number of sections on the Delhī-Amritsar main line were opened in quick succession in 1911. These were Dhilwān-Hamīrā, Jullundur-Phagwārā, Phagwārā-Ludhiānā, Ludhiānā-Dorāhā and Gobindgarh-Sirhind.

Jullundur City was connected with Ferozepore Cantt over a period of two years between June 23, 1912, when the first section Jullundur City-Kapūrthalā was opened and August 11, 1913, when the terminal section Makhū-Ferozepore Cantt was brought into use. In 1913 was also built the short branch line between Phillaur and Lohiān Khās. Both these lines were built under a contract between the Secretary of State and the Southern Punjāb Railway Company. During this and the following year, two more branch lines, Jullundur Cantt-Hoshiārpur and Jullundur City-Nakodar, came into being. Building activity in this area continued in 1915 during the course of which Jullundur City-Mukerīān and Phagwārā-Rāhon branch lines were laid. About this time, a fifty-mile spur was built from Jākhal southwest up to Hissār, thus providing a continuous rail link between this place and Ludhiānā.

Jīnd and Pānīpat were connected by rail in 1916. According to the pattern which had been well established, the land within the territory of Jīnd state was provided by the Jīnd Darbār and that within British territory by the Government of India. At the time of construction, the Jīnd-Pānīpat Railway formed an integral part of Delhī-Umbālā-Kālkā Railway Company. About the same time was built the Rohtak-Pānīpat Railway, part of which between Gohānā and Pānīpat was lifted during World War II for supply of track and other materials to the Middle East.

After 1916 there was a long gap during which there was no construction activity in Punjāb till 1927 when a branch line was constructed from Verkā northwards. It now ends at Derā Bābā Nānak in Indian territory, short of the river Rāvī. This line was completed in 1929. A year before that, a short spur of twelve miles from Batālā to connect with the religious seat of the Ahmadiyā community at Qādiān had been constructed.

By then the needs of the Punjāb in the matter of railway lines had

been adequately fulfilled. We, therefore, see no new construction up to the partition of the country in 1947. The first line to be built after India attained Independence was from Mukerīān to Pathānkot which became necessary to provide a convenient rail link with Jammū and Kashmīr state. In later years, a scheme for the extension of the line was approved and the line has so far progressed up to Jammū. At present, a survey is also being carried out for a further extension from Jammū to Ūdhampur.

Other important lines which have been constructed since partition are the extension from Ropar to Nangal, thus providing a connection with Anandpur Sāhib, an important seat of Sikh religion. To serve Chandīgarh, the Ambālā Cantt-Kālkā line was diverted from its original alignment.

There are two mountainous railways in northern India—the Kālkā-Simlā Railway and the Kāngrā Valley Railway, both very scenic and picturesque.

Communications between Kālkā and Simlā were first established in 1856 when Col Kennedy, Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, built a 58-mile long road.

The railway line was constructed in 1903. It ascends from 2,800 ft. to a height of 7,000 ft. at the entrance to Simlā town. The line has a continuous succession of sharp curves along the valley in the lower reaches and the hill spurs flanking it in the mountains. Besides innumerable cuttings and embankments the line bores through as many as 103 tunnels totalling 5 miles in length. The longest of these is 3,752 ft. at an altitude of 5,000 ft. The numerous picturesque arch viaducts over which the track runs aggregate to 1.75 miles.

In his book, Mahārīshī Debendranāth Tagore, the illustrious father of Rabindranāth Tagore, described the journey undertaken by him from Calcuttā to Simlā in 1856. He made the first part of the journey by road up to Banāras which cost him rupees 100 in terms of money and 45 days in terms of time. From Banāras, he left by a coach for Allāhābād reaching the right bank of the Gangā the next evening and crossed over by ferry to the other side, spending a night on the boat inside the coach. Another 14 days, and the stage coach brought him to Āgrā. "My coach," he writes, "used to travel day and night; in the middle of the day we would cook and eat our meals under a tree." The journey from Āgrā to Delhī was done by boat in one month. Giving an idea about the speed of the boat, he remarks, "The boat went its way, but I



used to walk along the bank of the Jamunā through cornfields, villages, and gardens enjoying the beauty of nature." From Delhī he made the journey up to Ambālā by coach and by *jhampān*, a sort of sedan chair, up to Simlā.

Till 1912, mail between Kālkā and Simlā was carried by horse-driven tongas, but in that year it was transferred to Kālkā-Simlā Railway.

The Kāngrā Valley Railway, 101 miles long on 2.5 feet narrow gauge, from Pathānkot to Jogindernagar, was opened in December, 1928, entirely within what was then the Punjāb and the Mandī state. The railway runs from west to east along the low hills of Dhaulādhār Range of the outer Himālayas. The Dhaulādhār Range rises to a height of 16,000 ft. at some places and is no more than 10 miles from certain points of the railway. The scenery is majestic and presents a delightful contrast between the mountains which overlook the line and the cultivated plains which are watered by several streams that cut across it.

The construction of this railway line, along a terrain which lies in an earthquake belt, was a unique engineering feat. The annual rainfall in the locality is more than 80 inches. During heavy rains, the earth often gets washed off, resulting in sliding of the boulders, which block the railway line. The line is full of sharp curves. The steepest ruling gradient is 1 in 25 between Baijnāth Paprolā and Jogindernagar, but at places it is as steep as 1 in 18.82. There are many major railway bridges, out of which one with a 180 feet steel arch span close to Kāngrā station stands out prominently and is the largest bridge of this kind in India.

In 1942, the Defence Department needed track materials for military requirement and the portion from Nagrotā to Jogindernagar (34 miles) was dismantled. In order to develop the vast natural resources of Kāngrā, Kulū and Mandī valleys, this length was restored in April, 1954, at a cost of about Rs. 1.5 lakhs per mile.

This hill railway serves the important towns of Nūrpur, Kāngrā, Pālampur and Jogindernagar and is a gateway to Kulū leading to Tibet through the famous Rohtāng Pass, which is an ancient trade route to India. Beautiful temples of Jawālāmukhī, Kāngrā and Baijnāth, built in the early thirteenth century by Dogrā kings, continue to attract pilgrims from all over India. The railway has opened up the valleys and brought the local population closer to urban life.

Railways have transformed the political, social, economic and cultural life of northern India since their inception, 115 years ago, in this part of

the world. They have played an important role in the administration of the country during British days and in the defence of India's borders since Independence in 1947. The habits of the people have undergone a tremendous change under the impact of the railways and both speed and movement have become a way of life with the enterprising Punjābīs. Economically, railways have helped the growth of big *mandīs* and the speedy transport of surplus foodgrains produced in this area, thus bringing it handsome financial rewards, which in turn have helped the fast development of trade and industry. Like arteries, railways span the social and cultural life of the city people and the rural masses who have by now produced a considerable amount of folklore around this theme. In young people's doleful songs, many are the curses the railway takes for the distances it places between lovers. Occasionally—only occasionally—it is acknowledged as a medium for uniting the parted ones.

## THE SIKHS IN CALIFORNIA

C. H. LOEHLIN

Among the first questions that come to mind are probably, "Where are the Sikhs to be found in California? Why did they concentrate in California? How many are there? Why did they come?" In this brief article an attempt will be made to shed some light on these questions.

Inasmuch as Sikhs naturally tend to associate with fellow Sikhs, the answer as to where they are is fairly clear. In California they are to be found in three fairly well defined areas. First, there is the San Joaquin Valley in central California where they are found within a strip from Sacramento southwards beyond Fresno, approximately 160 miles long by 40 wide. In the centre of this strip their first Gurdwārā was built in 1915 by the Khālsā Dīwān Society of the United States, at Stockton. The second area is in the extreme south, from El Centro on the Mexican border north to the Salton Sea in an area 50 miles long by 40 wide. Here a Gurdwārā was built in 1948 by remodelling a Buddhist temple. The third area is the Sacramento Valley in northern California. It is about 100 miles long and 40 wide, with the heaviest concentration of Sikhs in California in the Yuba-Sutter county area. Here a Gurdwārā is being constructed near Yuba City, at Tierra Buena. The Ground-Breaking Ceremony was held on November 29, 1969, thus celebrating Gurū Nānak's 500th birth anniversary. Among the distinguished guests present was the famous historian, Dr Gandā Singh himself!

The fluctuating number of Sikh students, and some business and professional people are to be found in and around San Francisco and Los Angeles. In each of these cities Gurdwārās are being built.

The total number of Sikhs in California in 1969 is given as variously from 7,000 to 10,000. It is difficult to get accurate figures, since the U. S. Census does not now give religion or race. Expert opinion gives 7,000 as about right.<sup>1</sup> Of these, perhaps 2,500 are in the Sacramento Valley, including San Francisco; 3,000 in the San Joaquin Valley, including Los Angeles; 1,000 in the Imperial Valley; and 500 scattered in other localities of California. It is interesting to note their preference for the flat river valleys. These would most resemble their Punjāb homeland

both in topography and climate. Here the Sikhs are farmers of diversified crops, but specializing in orchards of peaches, plums, grapes, walnuts and almonds in the north. The Yuba-Sutter area has the reputation of growing more peaches than any other comparable area in the world. Around Yuba City-Marysville rice is extensively cultivated, probably for the Chinese-Japanese market in the California cities.

Mention should be made of the Sikhs in Canada because of their connection with California immigration. They numbered 2,000 in 1944, and are settled mostly in British Columbia in southwestern Canada, where they are mainly in the lumbering business. They have seven Gurdwārās in that area. This would seem to indicate a considerable increase in population over 1944.<sup>2</sup>

Why did they come, and when? Here again definite information is scanty. Khushwant Singh says that Sikh immigration to the U.S.A. was a "spill-over" from Canada about the turn of the century. From 1904-1906, 600 came.<sup>3</sup> The 1907 riots against them in Bellingham, Washington, just near the Canadian border, when 600 American lumber mill workers raided 400 "Hindūs" (as any people from Hindustān were called) and drove them from the city, would seem to show this southward migration from Canada. The Sikhs had gone from one lumbering area to another. The labour riots, albeit on a much smaller scale, at Live Oak, California, on January 25, 1908, and St. John, Oregon, on March 21, 1910, would seem to indicate their continued southward migration. A U.S. Government publication rather irresponsibly states, "In fact, it would appear that the presence in California of the Hindū is largely traceable to one large boatload from British Columbia, out of which country they were forcibly driven."<sup>4</sup> At any rate, by 1910 there were 6,000 East Indians (so called to distinguish them from American Indians) in California, mostly Sikhs.

Severe economic conditions, due to drought and crop failures in the Punjāb, are also mentioned as causes for emigration. Jacoby mentions contacts with Westerners while in the British army and police. Some came via Canada or the Philippines, many direct, or from Mexico. Jacoby divides Sikh immigration into California into three periods: (1) 1904-1914, the beginning of World War I, when the "Old Timers" came as farm labourers. In 1914, the Commissioner General of U.S. Immigration said there were 20,000 to 30,000 East Indians here, mostly illegally, whereas Jacoby puts the total number at 7,000. (2) In the period 1918 to 1930 "students" and illegals came. Many came under student

quotas, but stayed on inconspicuously to avoid detection, and later furnished an educated leadership for the Sikh community. During the period 1920 to 1930, it is estimated that at least 3,000 Hindūs and Sikhs entered illegally, mostly via Mexico. (3) With the passing of the Luce-Cellar Bill by the U. S. Congress in 1946 the Sikhs could obtain American citizenship, bring over their families, and own land. The quota was 100 for India, but as families and relatives were allowed beyond this quota, and the law was interpreted liberally, many more than that entered legally.<sup>5</sup>

The road to full citizenship had been rough. At first, many Hindustānīs had been admitted as "Caucasians" and so could become citizens. However, in February, 1917, the Barred Zone Act was applied to India, along with Siam, Indo-China, Siberia, Afghānistān, Arabia, the Maylay Islands. This Act was reinforced by a Supreme Court decision which stated that "a Hindū is not a free white person;" hence he was ineligible for U. S. citizenship. Not only was further naturalization barred for them, but citizenships granted in the fifteen years after 1908 were revoked.<sup>6</sup> It seems likely that after the huge influx of Chinese and Japanese immigrants during the railroad building era of the late nineteenth century, with the problems arising therefrom, the few hundreds of Sikhs became the targets of this racial ill-will. The Sikhs were conspicuous with their turbans and beards. They were lampooned in the American press as "the Turbaned Tide" and "the Rag Heads."<sup>7</sup>

Another drastic restriction was the application of the 1924 Immigration Act which based quotas on the foreign-born population of 1890, when East India immigration had not started.<sup>8</sup> This stopped legal, but fostered illegal entry. The sense of frustration and confusion arising from these immigration and naturalization laws, together with the absence of women among the hundreds of Sikh men, is reflected in the number of crimes of violence, usually committed against each other, and the high incidence of sex crimes attributed to the early Sikh settlers.

However, after the passing of the Luce-Cellar Bill in 1946, the lot of the Sikh farmers in the three California valleys is, on the whole, a happy and prosperous one. There seems now to be a movement to bring over Punjābī wives and families, with the evident intent of making California their home.

Government reports were most unfavourable to the early Sikh immigrants. In one we read :

The Hindū, in the opinion of the Commissioner of the State

Bureau of Labor Statistics, is the most undesirable immigrant in the State. His lack of personal cleanliness, his low morals and his blind adherence to theories and teachings so entirely repugnant to American principles make him unfit for association with American people. These references apply to the low caste Hindūs or Sikhs.<sup>9</sup>

Evidently these immigrants were not welcomed by officialdom. Small wonder that ties with the Homeland remained strong and that they left in waves at times of crisis in India. In 1914 at the time of the unhappy Komagata Maru incident in Vancouver harbour and the formation of the Ghadar Party to foment revolution against the British Rāj in India, hundreds of Sikhs left California to volunteer for action in India. At the time of the Gurdwārā control agitation in 1920 many more left for the Punjāb. Many more left on the Declaration of Independence for India.

This may be as good a place as any to mention briefly the Ghadar Party and other revolutionary activities against the British in which California Sikhs were involved. In 1913 the Ghadar Party was organized as a development of "The Hindustān Workers of the Pacific Coast." A weekly paper called *The Ghadar* was published in Urdū and especially in Gurmukhī, as well as in other Indian languages. This was issued from the Party premises in San Francisco, and soon circulated widely among Indian communities in the East. The first issue stated the Party's objective as :

Today there begins in foreign lands, but in our country's language a war against the British Rāj... What is our name ? Ghadar. What is our work ? Ghadar. Where will Ghadar break out ? In India. The time will soon come when rifles and blood will take the place of pen and ink. *Ghadar*, November 1, 1913.<sup>10</sup>

One might surmise that, while American officialdom could not sanction bloody revolution against a friendly power, there was much sympathy with the demand for Indian Independence. At any rate, the Ghadar Party remained unmolested at the headquarters in San Francisco for many years.

Soon after this, on May 23, 1914, the Komagata Maru arrived in Vancouver harbour with 376 Indians, mostly Sikhs, aboard. The passengers were from India, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Kobe, and Yokohama; so, since the passengers had not all come "directly from India" most were refused permission to land. After two hot, crowded months

in the harbour, the ship was escorted out of the harbour by a naval vessel and forced to go back. This, and the violent treatment of most of the passengers when they landed in Calcuttā, only served to inflame the Ghadarites the more. The German alliance they sought brought the United States Government against them when the United States entered the War on April 6, 1917, and seventeen Ghadar leaders, along with eighteen Germans, were arrested. The Ghadarites in India, however, continued to receive funds from Sikhs in California. In 1924 they turned to the Communists, and even sent a batch of Ghadarites to Russia for training.

Attempts were made to smuggle arms from the United States to India, to be used against the British Indian Government, a friendly power. The 5,000 revolvers smuggled on the *Henry S.* were lost when the ship was captured by the British navy. In March 1915, the *Annie Larson* "loaded with war material" from the United States was captured by the U.S. Navy and impounded for carrying contraband.<sup>11</sup> All this obviously did not enhance the reputation of the California Sikhs in the eyes of U. S. Government officials. Finally, "Communist infiltration split the Ghadar Party. The majority of the Ghadarites in the United States and Canada either turned anti-communist or were submerged by the wave of anti-communism which spread over the Western world... In 1948 the assets of the party were turned over to the Indian ambassador in the United States, thus bringing to an end its 30-year-old turbulent career."<sup>12</sup>

In spite of all this dealing with the German Nazis, then with the Russian Communists, and in spite of many unfavourable official reports against the first Punjābī settlers, the Sikhs are now a highly respected community in California. To find the reason for this change, we now turn to consider some of the economic and social aspects of their history in California.

The Sikhs have long been noted for their power to adapt themselves to circumstances they cannot control. Their practical optimism and freedom from apathy has led them to accept whatever befalls in the Providence of God and try to turn it to their own advantage :

An Indian historian remarks with admiration on "the elasticity of character, the power to adapt themselves" of the Sikhs. Their vigour of body and mind enabled them to withstand the changes of a rigorous climate, so that "the burning sun, heavy rains, freezing winter and rough weather exercised no deterring influence on them." Even persecution, the destruction of their homes and sacred

buildings, and the enslavement of their women and children did not succeed in crushing their spirit.<sup>13</sup>

In Canada, too, the Sikhs showed this ability. They not only adapted themselves to a new climate and a new civilization, but to new occupations as well. Coming from the farms of the Punjāb, they got construction jobs on the Canadian railways. Later they turned to the lumber industry, so that one authority says, "These farmers from the Punjāb have not only adapted themselves to work in the moist forests of western Canada, but they have mastered the mechanized skills of the more intricate mill work."

Even in 1920, before the Sikhs could buy land in California, the Chief Sanitary Engineer of the State Commission of Immigration and Housing had this to say :

Our experience in labor camp inspection shows that Hindūs are rapidly leaving the employed list and are becoming employers. Particularly is this true in the rice growing section of California, in Yolo, Colusa, Glenn, Butte, Sutter and Yuba counties, also in the cotton district of Imperial County... In Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties we find Hindūs employed in some orchards and vineyards; also in the sugar beet section in Yolo County and the Salinas Valley. The number is rapidly growing less, for the change from employed to employer or lessee is rapidly placing the Hindū in the position of "little landlord." The Hindū will not farm poor land. He wants the best and will pay for it. Consequently the American owner who can get a big rental for his land desires the Hindū. He will pay.<sup>14</sup> (Note : "Hindū" bears the usual American geographical interpretation—anyone from Hindustān is a Hindū. Here it obviously means "Sikh.")

Their success as orchard agriculturalists is seen in the peach farming in Sutter County. While, in 1966, they owned 20% of the farms, they produced 35% of the peach tonnage. Peach cultivation is an intricate process involving spraying for insect control, fertilization, cultivation for weed control, irrigation, thinning, pruning, cover crop planting, and harvesting. Several own and operate the most modern machines for shaking the trees and catching the peaches or plums on canvas aprons, then by conveyor belt to huge bins for transportation by tractor to the sorting stations of the big canning companies. Most now live in modest houses with plumbing, electricity, gas for cooking and heating. This



is far different from the living conditions of the early settlers, who often slept on the ground around open fires, or in barns on the hay; their cooking was over camp-fires, their food the simplest. They worked ten or twelve hours a day for a dollar and a half, and yet they managed to save. Their adaptability, their determination to save part of their income, however meagre, along with hard work and the "Khālsā spirit" of helping each other out with the lending of tools and equipment, have all contributed to the prosperity of the Sikh farming community.<sup>15</sup>

The Sikhs are traditionally a devout people. Their religion encourages worldly success and social responsibility, values which have obviously helped their progress. Sikhism centres around *Nām* (worship) and *Sevā* (service). The people of Stockton noticed this spirit of service :

Although the Sikh Temple was built in the modern period, it is a pioneer church of unusual interest and should be included in this history. The Sikh Temple, located at 1930 North Grant Street, was dedicated on November 21, 1915... A priest was in charge of the Temple to attend to the wants of the members at any time of day or night. Charity was practised by the members and no man applying for shelter or food was ever turned away, regardless of who he was. The hoboos passing by on the Southern Pacific tracks, just in rear of the Temple, would always be fed from a kitchen dining-room, and a dormitory located on the ground floor would provide sleeping quarters.<sup>16</sup>

With regard to assimilation, a sociologist, who had made a thorough study of the Sikhs in California, sums up his findings as follows :

At this half-century in the life of the East Indians in the United States it is apparent that acculturation is definitely taking place, but it cannot be said that assimilation has as yet been accomplished. In terms of several aspects of their way of life, they are still identifiable as being from India. In terms of the social organizational structure of American society, the East Indians are even less an integral part of American life. And finally, in terms of their biological merging into the stream of American life, this process is even less likely for the immediate future than it appeared to be a decade or so ago... There is in this paper no basis for leaping to the conclusion that the East Indians are unassimilable because assimilation has not yet taken place; and even if we were to establish a scale of "assimilability" the East Indian would undoubtedly

stand very high on any list of the peoples of the world... Nor is there any justification for insisting that some greater measure of assimilation, integration, or amalgamation ought immediately to be pressed. There is no evidence that these people are the less emotionally linked to America by reason of their tendency to enjoy curry, speak Punjābī with their friend or worship at the temples of their fathers. Nor is there any certainty that their loyalty to America would be enhanced by forcing them to join western clubs and lodges, or marry only with persons of non-Indian background. Loyalty is an inward thing, demonstrated not by the clothes people wear, the language dialects they may use—or even the oaths they are compelled to sign—but by the whole bent of their personality and character. In this regard, there is little today to indicate that the East Indians are less entitled to the name “American” than are any of the rest of us.<sup>17</sup>

On the basis of their adaptability and enterprise in solving the problems of settling in new environments in the past, there seems no reason to believe that they will not continue to do so as they face the problems and opportunities of a new day. The present financial difficulty of inflation and expensive loans will pass in time, and the Sikhs seem to be getting ready to face present stringency. The common rumour is that Sikh farmers are saving money to buy more good land, and often go into partnership with each other to do this.

The Sikhs have been saving money also to bring over their families, or perhaps brides, from the Punjāb. Since the Immigration Laws were liberalized in 1965, other relatives, parents, brothers, sisters, have been brought to California. The impact of this new immigration is highlighted in a meeting called by Mr Kaperos, Education Director of Special Services, and attended by the Elementary School Coordinator, three principals, one vice-principal, four teachers (two of them Punjābīs), the Director of the Hindustānī Radio Programme and two retired missionaries from the Punjāb :

Mr Kaperos explained that the reason for calling the meeting was the concern for youngsters of East Indian descent in our schools with limited backgrounds in the English language and a limited knowledge of the American culture. Though there is a concentration of these students at Barry, Tierra Buena, Gray Ave., and Yuba City High School, every school in the district has some children

who fit this description. There are approximately 150-200 East Indian youngsters in this district. These children range in culture from those who are completely westernized to those who are new immigrants. The problem of socialization is felt more in grades 7-12 than at the younger level.

Under Educational Resources Agencies, Title III, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, it may be possible to receive Federal monies to develop a program to help these children.<sup>18</sup>

A problem that will be increasingly urgent is likely to centre around the attitudes and occupations of the coming generation. In addition to new arrivals, many children of Sikh families will be born and brought up in California. They will have little difficulty in adopting American ways and values. Can they also be taught to preserve the ideals of their parents in the hectic swirl of American life? Family solidarity, simple living, thrifty saving, and hard, honest labour need emphasis today in American civilization. An Indian sociologist, speaking of conditions in the Imperial Valley, is sceptical :

Most of the Sikhs are farmers and reasonably well-off. They have built a reputation in the area as hard-working and diligent. They, however, tend to isolate themselves from the community and tend to mix among themselves. Most of them were married to Mexican women and their children are drifting away from the Sikh religion. There are two *Gurdwārās* in California : one in Stockton, another in El Centro. Sunday services are regularly held in these *Gurdwārās*. They also celebrate such Sikh festivals as *Baisākhī*, *Pūrnimā* or the birthday of Gurū Nānak. The children of the Sikhs are noticeably apathetic to the Sikh church and in El Centro at least, they refrain from visiting the *Gurdwārā* except on festive occasions when free *langars* are available consisting of typical Sikh food such as *rotī*, fried *masūr dāl*, *sabji*, *chatni* and *boondī rāitā*.<sup>19</sup>

Dr Gulzār Singh Johl, however, is optimistic. In an interview with a newspaper reporter, he is quoted as saying :

I said it was either medicine or farming or both. It's hard to explain why. Farming's just in my veins. It's become a way of life. Most people aim to own their own land. Most of them are saving their money for a down payment or something. And all our people want to stay in farming. The kids sometimes think about getting this or that kind of a job but they stay in farming. They

have something to start with.

Anyone can appreciate just being here in this country, continued Gulzār. Where else could you buy (thousands of dollars) worth of land without paying a penny out of your pocket? You pay it, of course, you pay a lot more, but you can work the land like it was your own even if it isn't your own, and hope some day it will be your own. This is the only place. If you don't want to talk to somebody, you don't have to. If you need help, there's always help available. If we need advice in our orchards, George Post is there. You can't even buy help in other places. Here it is supplied to us just for the asking. But the main thing is opportunity. If a person wants to advance himself, he can. And if he doesn't, it's his own fault.<sup>20</sup>

Acculturation to American ways of life will doubtless go on; and for preserving the culture of Sikhism, Gurdwārās are being established, and libraries of Sikh literature are being developed. The Gurdwārās will be centres of worship primarily, but also social and political centres. As more Sikhs become U. S. citizens and voters, no doubt their interest in American politics will increasingly find an outlet. A few years ago Dalip Singh Saund of the Imperial Valley was elected to the U. S. Congress. The Sikhs have seen the value of political influence in the passing of the Luce-Cellar Bill. The old Khālsā ideal of the democratic theocracy can be transformed into American citizenship activity on the part of a small but able minority.

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## GHADAR SOURCES : RESEARCH ON PUNJĀBĪ REVOLUTIONARIES IN AMERICA

MARK JUERGENSMEYER

One of the more interesting chapters in India's struggle for independence occurred largely outside of the subcontinent. The Ghadar movement—so called after a word meaning “mutiny,” or “revolution”—focused on the activities of a small group of travelling Punjābī intellectuals who set up a base in San Francisco, supported by a larger number of prosperous Punjābī farmers living in Northern California during the early decades of this century. The Ghadarites sent gunboats to India, attempted to raise an army, produced voluminous literature, and came to grief through British intervention and American Government investigations.

The Ghadar movement is fascinating as a historical event, but it is curious also as a case study in how history is viewed and written. The present attempt of the University of California, Berkeley, to locate all original and secondary sources on the Ghadar movement affords an opportunity to survey the literature and to assess its historiography.

The survey indicates that availability of sources and the historical perspective in which the Ghadar events tend to be portrayed have had strong influences on the historian. The movement was many-faceted, a complex series of episodes of which any single report or document provides only a selective view. The Ghadar party may be viewed from at least four different perspectives :

- a. an interesting case among modern revolutionary movements, notable because of its international dimensions, and the extensive dissemination of literature to develop local and international support.
- b. a key development in the evolution of Indian independence, one closely associated with militant aspects of nationalism and especially with subsequent political developments in Punjāb.
- c. a fascinating international organization, with a role in relations among England, America and Germany, and, to a lesser extent, involved with Irish nationalism and colonial relations in Southeast Asia.

- d. a chapter in the development of ethnic communities in the United States; since the Ghadar efforts were nurtured in American soil, the party has played a role in fostering identity and activism among Punjābīs living there.

This brief essay will provide an overview of the literature available on the Ghadar activities in light of the four dimensions described above. Diverse and wide-ranging, the materials include original documents and publications of the party, memoirs of early participants, various government reports, and a wealth of "secondary sources"—books and articles on the movement, utilizing information from many places, snippets of informations pasted together to give a portrait of what the Ghadar movement hoped to accomplish and succeeded in doing.

#### GHADAR AS A REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The Ghadar party was a serious and important aspect of Indian nationalism. Yet, the Ghadar also was an extraordinarily exciting movement, full of adventure, intrigue and high drama—gunboats, conspiracy with international agents, and an inflammatory propaganda machine. Fascination with Ghadar, as an energetic revolutionary network, accounts in part for the fact that most study on the movement has been directed towards party organization. Accounts tend to focus on a compact time period, 1913-1917, which provides the ingredients for a complete adventure story—beginning with the flamboyant appearance of Lālā Har Dayāl at Stanford University and ending with the tragic conspiracy trial at San Francisco.

The original materials and contemporary accounts on those five active years are considerable, although not as complete as historians might wish. Few party records remain except for some used as evidence in the San Francisco trial. Those extant records are at the U. S. Federal Archives in San Bruno, California. According to several observers, when the old Ghadar headquarters on 5 Wood Street in San Francisco were excavated about twenty years ago, the original party documents were taken to a farm house near Davis, California, which promptly burned down. Other reports indicate that the records had been destroyed much earlier. Important Ghadar publications nevertheless are still accessible.

The Ghadar party emphasized a publication programme, partly because of the energetic ambitions of Rām Chandra, the Punjābī who served as

editor and news director in the early stages of the movement. The newspapers, such as the original *Ghadar* (27),\* from which the party received its name, series of pamphlets such as *Ghadar-dī-Goonj* (26), articles by Har Dayāl (18-23), and other tracts (3-4), were written in Punjābī or Urdū. Their purpose primarily was the creation of support from the Punjābī community in the United States. Other pamphlets such as *A Few Facts About British Rule* (1), reprints of American criticism of the British (35,11), and Rām Chandra's letter to President Wilson (12) had another purpose, namely to arouse sympathy among the American people. These drew parallels between India's struggle against the British and the American revolution. In addition, pamphlets, posters, and related material (written in Punjābī, Urdū, or Hindī), attempted to reach the wider Indian community scattered throughout the world. Some of this literature was smuggled into India past the vigilant British. The items that the British caught are preserved with the "Home Department-Political" files in Delhī and London; some of these are described in Barrier (8).

Ghadarites printed propaganda on their own press located at the Yugāntar Āshram and the Hindustān Ghadar headquarters in San Francisco. Kesar Singh Dhillon (Oakland, California) has the original printing press proudly on display at his home, along with some of the original publications. The Ghadar literature has been described more fully in an article by Giles Brown (10), and in a chapter in Laxman Prasād Māthur's monograph (68).

The publications reflect an element of Ghadar ideology, but the main emphases are on the evils of colonial rule and the need for independence. Alternative forms of government receive little discussion. The more recent Ghadar constitution (16) does not provide many clues on how India should be governed, beyond a general respect for parliamentary order. The title of a later Ghadar newspaper, *The United States of India* (52), suggests the American model of democracy, but that may have been an attempt to flatter America in hope of support. The social and political vision of the Ghadar movement can be seen more clearly in the writings by and about two leaders: Sohan Singh Bhaknā and Lālā Har Dayāl. The political thought of Bhaknā, one of the members of the original founding group in Astoria, Oregon (in 1913), has been

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\* Numbers indicate the bibliographic citation listed in the select list of sources appended to this essay.



described in a recent biography (65). Har Dayāl, the intellectual leader of Ghadarites, wrote considerably in articles (18-23). A published volume of letters (21) and biographies by Emily Brown (55) and by Dharmavīra (59) also describe his progressive social vision.

Ghadar publications cast only partial light on the party's internal operation. Government reports—the British proceedings in the India Office Records and National Archives of India\* and the U. S. investigations and records of conspiracy trials (49-50)—contain extensive descriptions of Ghadar membership and activities. These official records are balanced by the inside views of the party functions, frequently available through interviews with former members of the organization.

Although valuable, interviews with old Ghadarites create substantial difficulties for scholars attempting to sort through personal interpretation, clouded memory, and the distortions of time. In the Punjāb, Gurdev Singh Deol (58) has used interviews with Ghadarites to great advantage; in the United States, Professor Harold Jacoby of the University of the Pacific (Stockton, California) conducted a dozen interviews among party members in 1950, when survivors from the pre-1917 period were more available than today. Recently, the widow of Rām Chandra (14), the widow of Lālā Har Dayāl (17), Dr Gobind Behārī Lāl (33-34), Mr and Mrs Poonā Singh (46-47), and other Ghadar members have been interviewed in the United States. Interviews with old Ghadarites in the Punjāb and their recorded statements are available at the Desh Bhagat Yādgar, Jullundur, and some recent interviews conducted in India are on cassette tape in the Berkeley Ghadar Collection.

The interviews have clarified events and shed light on the organizational character of the movement. The two major elements in the party—the rural farmers providing much of the support, and the more sophisticated University intellectuals who gave ideological leadership—had different styles and life patterns. The two groups nonetheless seem to have been remarkably cooperative and united in a common cause. The inevitable factions and tensions which mar the unity of every political group seem to have been based, in the Ghadar movement, more along lines of personal animosity and patterns of friendship rather than on communal tension or urban/rural jealousy. In fact, a common theme of articles and poetry, such as found in *Ghadar-de-Gīt* (25), involves the

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\* Primarily in Home-Political proceedings (IOR, NAI) and the files of the Judicial and Public and the Political and Secret Committees (IOR).

unity of Muslim, Hindū, and Sikh communities in the struggle against the British. Some publications had three names—*Rām*, *Allāh*, and *Nānak*—on the masthead. Similarly, caste differences seem to have been obscured intentionally. The autobiography of one Punjāb scheduled caste leader lists his participation in the Ghadar movement as a crucial liberating experience (Māngoo Rām, 42-43).

If all Ghadar participants had written down their experiences, the history of what happened would be enriched. Unfortunately, history generally does not write itself. The Ghadar movement nevertheless does have a recent collective history, compiled by G. S. Sainsrā, and written by former Ghadarites and their associates residing near Jullundur, Punjāb. The project was undertaken by the Desh Bhagat Yādgār Committee, which plans to publish soon all of the original testimonies on which the history is based. The history, *Ghadar Party Dā Itihās* (45), written in Punjābī, is intriguing but must be read cautiously. The narrative has been written long after the fact and represents especially the viewpoint of those Ghadarites who became involved in the leftist politics of the Punjāb. Nonetheless, the book is the best attempt to uncover original material, and to recreate the collective experiences of the participants.

From a similar political perspective, the forthcoming study of the later developments of the Ghadar movement by Sohan Singh Josh should be considerably interesting. Josh, himself a distinguished leader of the Punjāb "Kirti" movement, and the CPI, has uncovered new material in both the United States and the Punjāb, in his recent research on the subject.

Perhaps the earliest scholarly study of the Ghadar movement was written in Punjābī, and based upon a combination of official records and personal testimony. Jagjīt Singh's *Ghadar Party Lehar* (Ghadar Party Movement) was published in Tarn Tāran, Punjāb, in 1955. At least five more recent scholarly accounts of the Ghadar party, published in English, also give a broad picture of Ghadar history. The differences among three of the books, by similarly competent scholars, illustrate the varied perspectives developed through the scholars' choices of source material. Deol (58) is apparently indebted to Jagjīt Singh for much of his material, and also relies primarily on interviews and other material available in the Punjāb; accordingly, he presents an image of the movement as more integrated into the Indian independence struggle than does Māthur (68), who relies almost solely on Government documents in painstakingly tracing the intrigues of the party. Bose (54) utilizes records in London,

Berlin and India to place Ghadar within the broad framework of international politics. The account of Ghadar presented by Khushwant Singh and Satindra Singh (74) throws light on the involvement of Sikhs in the movement. An earlier forerunner of scholarship, based on interviews with the early Ghadar leader, Sohan Singh Bhaknā, is Randhīr Singh's *Ghadar Heroes* (77). A new Ghadar history, now being prepared by political scientist Harīsh Purī of Gurū Nānak Dev University, Amritsar, promises to be the most thorough analysis of the materials available in India, including new interviews and other sources recently uncovered. Taken together, these volumes provide a solid summary of the resources on Ghadar currently available to scholars. Collectively, the authors tell the exciting story of the Ghadar party as a revolutionary movement.

#### GHADAR IN INDIA'S POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

To gain perspective on the larger role of Ghadar in India's struggle for independence, the narrow time range (1913-17) must be expanded, placing the party's activities within the major trends of Indian political development in the early part of this century. How was Ghadar related to changes in political thought and technique, and how did the movement contribute to national and regional political consciousness? Thorough exploration of these dimensions necessitates study of a wide range of material, much of it peripheral to events commonly associated with Ghadar. Only the most basic sources will be mentioned here.

The biographies of some Ghadar leaders illustrate the roots and connections of the party with other political developments within the subcontinent. Har Dayāl's early life and his break with the Ārya Samāj are traced in biographies (Brown, 55; Dharmavīra, 59), and in Kenneth Jones' detailed history of the Samāj (64). Moreover, Har Dayāl's link with the international movement can be explored through study of his letters (20, 21). Rām Chandra edited nationalist journals and, according to his widow (14), had connections with nationalists in Delhī, Calcuttā, and throughout Southeast Asia before coming to the United States. Bhāī Parmānand had similar involvement with the more politically active segments of the Ārya Samāj, and with Ghadar.

It should be noted that the Ghadar party was not the only Indian nationalist organization in the United States. Small groups preceded it, according to R. K. Dās (57). H. T. Mazumdār (69) and Bose describe

other groups existing at approximately the same time, and also later, usually of a more moderate stripe.

The British Government's assessment of the Ghadar serves as one avenue for gauging the importance of the movement as a revolutionary threat. The most interesting accounts include the reports of the Punjab police investigators, F. C. Isermonger and J. Slattery (31), and the evidence marshalled against the Ghadar defendants in the Lahore Conspiracy Trials and in the Seditious Committee Report of 1918 (30). Also useful are the lists of material banned from entering India. N. G. Barrier has compiled background on Ghadar and related publications and supplied a historical framework for understanding how and why the British seized the controversial publications (8).

Historians have been divided over the relative contribution of Ghadar to modern Indian history. *The Cambridge History of India*, for example, accords it one line, and that, inaccurate. R. C. Majumdar's history of the independence struggle (67), on the other hand, devotes almost 100 pages to the Ghadar activities. K. K. Banerjee's short study (53) and Bose's larger description of the international movement (54) probably are the most balanced assessments. Although taking the same approach, Deol (58) has examined a wider assortment of sources and therefore his interpretations and facts merit particular scrutiny.

The immediate effect of Ghadar on India's independence struggle is debatable, particularly because Congress at the time operated with a different style and tended to look askance at violent techniques. Nevertheless, there is some possibility that the Ghadar party influenced several nationalist leaders. The relationship between the party and Lajpat Rai's "India Home Rule League of America," for example, may be examined in Lajpat Rai's autobiographical writings (41), or in N. G. Rathore's study of the League (72). Majumdar (67) and Banerjee (53) discuss influences on Tagore, a position rejected by Stephen Hay (61). Bose (54) links M. N. Roy and Ghadar activities, although Roy's own memoirs are quite critical of Ghadar; and Deol (58) has suggested additional contacts with Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army. In addition, the journalist Durgā Dās (*India: From Curzon to Nehru*) has claimed that Ghadar finances contributed to the founding of the anti-colonialist newspaper, *The Hindustan Times*. Although such issues require more detailed study, the Ghadar party did have an indirect but useful impact on the overall nationalist efforts. The U.S.-based organization helped foster a sense of urgency, and, with other extremist groups, may have

goaded the Congress towards a more active and militant stance.

In addition to its muddled influence on the course of independence movement, Ghadar made some very salient contributions to the emergence of new political forces in the Punjāb. From the "Kirti" movement of the 1920's to the recent journal, *People's Path* (39), members of the Ghadar Party have had a distinctive role to play in the most active aspects of the Punjāb's political left. The particular Ghadar contribution to Punjāb Marxism appears to be the early and persistent insistence that national liberation and the class struggle are integrally related matters. Precisely how the Ghadarites, returning from the United States, often by way of Moscow, developed this distinctive role, and how they responded and interacted within the currents of international communism is a largely unexplored matter, even though the British seemed to be keenly interested in just such relationships. It is said that the British political activist, Agnes Smedley, was in contact with Ghadarites before her involvement with the early Maoist movement in China; whether this resulted in a relationship between the Maoists and those Ghadarites known to be in China well into the 1930's is a murky unexplored matter. Perhaps Sohan Singh Josh's new study of the later Ghadar party will illumine some of that. Josh's early biography of Sohan Singh Bhaknā (65), along with the *Desh Bhagat Yādgār* history (45) and a few other studies, such as that by T. R. Chaddhā (56), are the only reports of Ghadar's impact on the Punjāb's left, thus far. Perhaps when a comprehensive history of Punjāb's Marxist movements is written, this Ghadar chapter will finally be brought into some perspective.

In addition to the Marxist tradition, Ghadar influence in the Punjāb appears in several other political areas. Ghadarites are claimed as nationalist leaders (the Ludhiānā District Gazetteer includes an account of a Ghadar hero memorialized by a statue in Ludhiānā's city centre), and one author, A. K. Ghose (60), ties together the party and Punjāb hero Bhagat Singh. Khushwant Singh's *History of the Sikhs* (volume two) mentions Ghadar influence on the Akālīs. To some extent, the local Congress also was the party's political heir; some Ghadarites definitely worked with Gāndhī, and later, within the Punjāb Congress. Many other Punjāb organizations had their origins in part from the political roots of the Ghadar movement. Of these, one of the more interesting was the Punjāb's strongest Scheduled Caste organization, the Ād Dharma Mandal, founded by a Ghadarite (Mangoo Rām; autobiography in the

Jullundur newspaper *Ravidās Patrikā*, 43; also in interview, 42). In sum, Ghadar's political impact in India was as profound as it was provocative; and at least in the case of the Punjāb political left, the Ghadar role was direct and seminal.

#### THE ROLE OF GHADAR IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Ghadar party cast its international net far and wide, from Manila to Mandalay, and from Stockton to Stockholm. Scholars are only beginning to discover how tightly that wide net was constructed, or more precisely, to unearth the composition of local units and the patterns of communication and command among them. Although Ghadar chapters were active outside India and North America, virtually no research has explored this dimension of nationalist adventure. Various sources list Ghadar branches in Kābul, Hong Kong, Manila, Bangkok, Shanghai, and Panama, in addition to contacts in Europe and elsewhere in Southeast Asia. According to the Indian Sedition Committee Report (30), Deol's study (58), and an unpublished thesis by R. W. Moosbergen (71), the 1915 Singapore uprising among Punjābī soldiers can be traced to Ghadar influence. The party did publish considerable literature in China and Japan intended to be smuggled into India, and some of the publications have been preserved (15). China branches apparently served as the staging area for American Punjābīs plotting a "Tibetan Mission" which hoped to attack the British from the Himālayas. Detailed information on the unseemly foray is not easily accessible. There are a few former Ghadarites in India and in America, still available for interview, who were involved with planning for the Mission (47); but even so, the exact dates and history of the project remain cloudy.

On the other side of the subcontinent, during the 1920's and 30's, Ghadar forces were at work in Kābul, Afghānistān, using that ancient route of sinister invasion—the Khyber Pass—as their smuggling corridor for pamphlets, arms, revolutionaries and funds. The former head of the Ghadar office in Kābul is still politically active in the Punjāb today; and his complete story would certainly illumine that dimension of Ghadar activity. According to other sources, the Turkish Government was behind the Kābul activities, printing pamphlets alleged to be from San Francisco; the Indian Muslim revolutionary, Barkatullāh, arranged for that interesting source of Ghadar support. At the same time that the Ghadar party was active in Kābul, working alongside it was

Rājā Mahendra Pratāp, who had his own peculiar notions of a World Federation of Nations. Pratāp was also involved in the struggle against the British, and tried to set up a government in exile. Later, Pratāp shifted his venue of operations to China, where the political direction of his ideology became more and more visionary. Some publications are extant from Pratāp's organization (15), and his own autobiography (38) and Bose's perspective on him (54) gives a sense of the character of the man and his undertakings; nonetheless, the details of the schemes, and their relationship to the Ghadar activities, remain as curious as the movement's ideology.

The Ghadar movement found friends within another country mobilizing against British colonialism—Ireland—with which Ghadar developed something of a revolutionary brotherhood. Some Ghadar literature promotes this sense of Irish-Indian unity against a common oppressor (for example, the tract *Hindustān Ate Ireland*, 32). According to Mrs Rām Chandra (14), the Irish defended the Ghadarites in California during the difficult days of the San Francisco Conspiracy Trial (1917-18).

Ghadar's major—and most damaging—international alliance was with Germany. Because the Germans were also in conflict with Great Britain at the time, such an alliance appeared to be prudent in the political tradition of Kautilya: "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." The entrance of the United States into World War I nevertheless made Ghadar co-operation with Germany untimely, and provided the rationale for America's sharp reprisals against the party (documented in D. P. Singh, 73; M. D. Strasser, 80). Perhaps otherwise Americans might have had greater sympathy for Ghadar's message. The United States also had fought for freedom from the British, and, except for American involvement in World War I, many Americans probably would not have condemned the Ghadarites for seeking foreign aid. After all, America had attempted the same type of alliance with a major power—France—during the break with Britain scarcely a century earlier.

The Ghadar-German relationship should not be exaggerated. According to Ghadar recollections, as recalled in interviews (14, 17, 33), biographies (7, 34, 38, 43), and the "official" Desh Bhagat version (45), the Germans contributed little to the movement. German funds did help finance Ghadar projects, and, according to Bose (54) and M. N. Roy (44), Ghadar had close contact with the Indian National Committee in Berlin—a Bengālī apparently ran messages between the groups and the German Foreign Office. The major support nevertheless came in

the form of German arrangements in 1915 for two shiploads of weapons (to be carried to India by the *Maverick* and the *Annie Larson*) for use by Ghadar recruits training in Siam and elsewhere in Southeast Asia. The potentially dangerous move ended abortively, owing largely to Ghadar bungling and to British intervention.

Despite its relative unimportance, the German relationship remains a subject of great fascination. Bose (54) focuses on the connection, and the alliance occupies much of Māthur's account (68), and those of G. T. Brown (9,10), E. E. Sperry (79), and J. W. Spellman (78). The easy availability of sources probably accounts for most of the scholarly interest (although no historian as yet has tapped the German archives nor the records of the British Foreign Office). Moreover, the German issue probably created the greatest concern both to Britain and America at the time. Government reports reflect an obsession over the *entente*. British proceedings (30) and the reports of intelligence agencies in the U. S. (on file in the U. S. Archives in San Bruno, California) contain extensive material on Ghadar-German co-operation.

With regard to the German conspiracy issue, special attention should be paid to the evidence collected by the prosecution and the testimony of witnesses. The trial effectively ended the most active phase of the Ghadar party, but the proceedings also produced a wealth of historical material on the movement. Copies of the complete court transcript of the San Francisco trial (*The United States vs. Franz Bopp, et.al.*) have not been available, curiously, in the United States. Berkeley will soon have the 6,000-page manuscript on microfilm, and the complete proceedings are also in the India Office Records in London. In addition, some twenty boxes of evidence currently are being preserved in uncatalogued fashion by the West Coast division of the United States Archives at 1000 Commodore Drive, San Bruno, California (near San Francisco).

Other sources on the "German issue" include the ones utilized in Landau's biased report on German agents during the First World War (66). The archives of the German Government remain the major untapped area of research; and those records should shed light on Germany's interest and support towards the Ghadar movement.\*

#### THE GHADAR CHAPTER IN NORTH AMERICAN ETHNIC HISTORY

For those few Ghadar leaders who temporarily resided in the United

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\* Microfilm copies are in the Public Office, London.



States, America was a brief resting place in their international quest to develop support for Indian freedom. For other Ghadarites, however, North America was a long-range place of residence. Participation in the Ghadar activities became for them at least a partial expression of their frustration as a new minority American community—a frustration with economic and social conditions, and conflict over identity.

Most accounts of the Ghadar party (especially those of Khushwant Singh and Deol) recognize that the problems of the immigrant community provided much of the enthusiastic support for revolutionary activities. Neither Canada nor America treated Indian immigrants hospitably, and their difficulty in not being able to assimilate with dignity into local society created a special need to affirm their Indian identity. The most useful information on immigration, laws, and residents in this period derives from Congressional reports (50) and the U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau for Immigration files (51). S. A. Waiz's book, *Indians Abroad* (81), also is helpful because of his interviews with early immigrants. Other specialty essays deal with general problems of immigration during this period, and also with Punjābīs in particular (see especially R. K. Dās, 57; E. W. Morse, 70; P. S. Singh, 76; the proceedings of the Asiatic Exclusion League, 5).

American newspapers and magazine articles at the time reflect a vulgar mass portrayal of the "ragheads," which they called the turbaned Sikhs, and of the "Hindūs," which they called all Indians, regardless of faith or regional background. *The New York Times*, and other responsible journals, defended the new immigrants; nonetheless the troubles persisted, especially in logging labour camps, where the low-paid American workers felt that the Indians' acceptance of even lower pay was a threat to their economic security. The Ghadar party capitalized on the immigrant Indians' sense of mistreatment by linking America's attitude towards Indians with alleged British manipulation of U. S. opinion (13).

Since many Punjābī residents of North America originally settled in Vancouver, Canada, before racial tensions and the lure of greener pastures brought them southward to the United States, a range of highly interesting materials on early immigrant conditions can be found in that area. Mr Talminder Singh Hundle (3221 Adanac Street, Vancouver) has in his basement many of the early issues of the *Hundūstānī*, the *Āryan*, and *India and Canada* (published by his uncle, Kartār Singh).\*

\* Filmed by Professor Kernial Singh Sandhū—film preserved in the library of the University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

Canadian, Mr Inderjit Singh Kohali, editor of the journal *Indo-Canadian*, has initiated a series of taped interviews with old immigrants in order to record their life experiences.

The story of the tragic journey of the ship *Komagata Maru* merits special attention, not only because it highlights the dilemma of Indian immigrants, but also because the incident bore a direct relationship with the beginnings of the Ghadar movement. The specially chartered ship brought a load of prospective immigrants to Canada in 1914. Despite attempts to follow Canadian laws designed to make entry virtually impossible, the immigrants could not land. Angry and disappointed, they returned to Calcuttā only to be fired upon by over-zealous British policemen. To Indians in North America who observed this tragedy of errors, the appeal of Ghadar's anti-British cause seemed suddenly appropriate. The *Komagata Maru* incident is included in British Government proceedings, and in Canadian newspaper stories. Fortunately for historians, the organizer of the venture, Gurdit Singh, wrote his own book-length account (28), which also provides valuable descriptions of the general situation among immigrants.\*

The struggles and problems of the Indian ethnic community in America fashioned the cradle of Ghadar's early development. In addition, these same patterns served as the ground to which the Ghadarites returned after the brief years of hectic international activity, 1913-1917. The Ghadar party continued, but its organization and goals somewhat shifted. The old cry of "Freedom for India" still could be heard in publications such as the *United States of India* (52), the *Independent Hindustān* (29), and other periodicals. At the same time, the party assumed the additional function of being a locus for ethnic identity among Punjābīs in California, and along with the Khālsā Dīwān Society, a centre of local social and political activity.

Research and source material on this later phase of Ghadar in America

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\* Gurdit Singh's autobiography is all the more interesting in that there are two versions of it—one claiming the other to be bogus and a fraud. The first book, *The Voyage of Gurū Nānak Jahāz* (the *Komagata Maru* had, understandably, been re-named by its Sikh cargo) was printed as Gurdit Singh's expose and used as evidence against Gurdit Singh by the British. The second book, *Zulmī Kathā*, claimed to be the real autobiography, and printed pictures of the original contracts for leasing the ship as proof of authenticity; far from whitewashing Gurdit Singh or excusing him from any revolutionary activity, the "real" autobiography makes Gurdit Singh all the more a revolutionary hero.

unfortunately remain inadequate. Kesar Singh Dhillon has helped keep Ghadar memories alive in recent years through a newspaper, *Call of the Martyrs*. The "Red Scare" during the McCarthy era of the 1950's foolishly raised inaccurate rumours about Ghadar connections with Communism and produced articles on the movement more fiction than fact. Although a sociologist at the University of the Pacific (Stockton, California), Professor Harold Jacoby has an impressive collection of interviews, records, and local accounts gathered over the last two decades, little of this material has been utilized thus far in publications (62,63).

The California community of Punjābīs takes justifiable pride in the Ghadar movement; they consider it their contribution to India's independence. Moreover, many of the more distinguished American citizens of Indian origin have been associated with Ghadar : Jawālā Singh, leader in the San Joaquin agricultural community; Dalīp Singh Saund, first Asian to be elected to the U. S. House of Representatives; and Dr Gobind Bihārī Lāl, Pulitzer Prize-winning Science Editor of the Hearst newspaper chain, who has written accounts of the Ghadar party (34). A final assessment of the role of Ghadar in the larger process of America's social development, however, is yet to be undertaken.

#### THE MATERIALS AND THE HISTORICAL ISSUES

The written material on the Ghadar movement—in its several dimensions—is quite voluminous. The original documents (primarily in Punjābī or Urdū) include at least 6 series of newspapers or magazines, 30 pamphlets, and dozens of posters printed by the Hindustān Ghadar party. Files and records of various government agencies in Britain, Canada, the United States, and India augment these original sources. Other sources of information include the approximately 10 autobiographies and 30 interviews with actual members of the Ghadar party and newspaper reports (the *San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle*, and the *Vancouver Sun*). No official party records appear to exist, however, aside from those in the U. S. Federal Archives.

These materials form the pool of sources on which 8 scholarly books and approximately 20 scholarly articles or chapters of books have been based. Ten biographies of Ghadar leaders are available. In addition, over a hundred more general historical and bibliographic works touch on the Ghadar movement in peripheral fashion, and are useful for their special perspective or particular bits of information.

This assortment of books, articles, and newspapers unfortunately are not collected in one depository. The Ghadar Collection of the South and Southeast Asia Library Service at the University of California, Berkeley, probably constitutes the largest single depository of original and secondary material. The National Archives of India contains a virtually unexplored set of government reports. The Desh Bhagat Yādgar Committee in Jullundur, Punjāb, has collected other original documents. The India Office Records and Library in London is especially valuable for government records and also for its collection of banned Ghadar material (to be described in a forthcoming monograph by N. G. Barrier). United States government records can be found in the U. S. National Archives (and on film in many libraries); the special set of trial evidence is available only in the branch at San Bruno, California. Among the numerous private collections of Ghadar material, four are specially noteworthy : the library of the Sikh temple, Stockton, California; the private holdings of Professor Harold Jacoby (University of the Pacific, Stockton, California); Kesar Singh Dhillon's set of Ghadar publications, removed from the old Ghadar headquarters and now in his home in Oakland, California; and Professor N. Gerald Barrier's library of Ghadar materials (temporarily housed at the Punjāb Study Center, University of Missouri, Columbia).

The total weight of all this information undoubtedly makes a contribution to our understanding of the Ghadar movement. The question remains as to what our knowledge about Ghadar helps us to understand. It was a peculiar movement, as well as a unique one, and it is difficult to make any sort of generalizations from its sequences of events. Moreover, the historical questions which scholars bring to the study of this movement—questions about the coherency of revolutionary organizations, the impact on the independence movement, the embryonic Marxism, the ethnic pride—shape the meanings to be discovered in the movement, by the way those questions define the movement and help to determine what events and issues and source materials are relevant to the study. Ghadar remains, then, not only a historical problem, but a problem in understanding the writing of history.

There is a renewed interest in the Ghadar movement, in part due to the rich research materials recently uncovered and currently available. But the interest may also be credited to the movement itself, its high intentions and high adventure, and the endless fascination of the variety in its historical perspectives.

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| CS-t-H    | Stanford University Libraries, Stanford. Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace. |
| CU        | University of California Library, Berkeley.   |
| CU-SSEALS | University of California, Berkeley. South/Southeast Asia Library Service.                 |
| DLC       | Library of Congress, Washington, D. C..   |
| H         | Hindī.  |
| ICRL      | Center for Research Libraries, Chicago.   |
| IOL       | India Office Library, London .  |
| NAI       | National Archives of India, Delhi.  |
| NN        | New York Public Library.  |
| P         | Punjābī.  |
| U         | Urdū.   |

These citations are selected from a larger list prepared for the Ghadar History Project at University of California, Berkeley, under the bibliographic supervision of Kenneth Logan, South Asia Librarian.

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## STUDENTS, SIKHS AND SWĀMĪS : PUNJĀBĪS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1899-1914

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Although several recent books have reviewed the history of Indian revolutionaries in America, the authors have tended to focus on the most dramatic episodes such as the work of the Ghadar party, the voyage of the Komagata Maru, and the San Francisco conspiracy trials.<sup>1</sup> These events nevertheless had their roots in the pre-1914 experiences of Indians, primarily Punjābīs, along the west coast of America. This paper examines the types of overseas Indians who formed the human reservoir of the Ghadar movement and the efforts of the U. S. Government to surveil and contain their activities. It suggests that American immigration officials bowed to British pressure and secretly permitted British agents to operate in the United States in an effort to stop the flow of what were considered to be undesirable Asiatics.

### THE TIDE OF TURBANS

From 1899 until the beginning of World War I, a total of 6,656 East Indians entered the United States, some 2,844 were debarred from entry, and 98 were deported (See *Table One*). These were the official figures but The Honorable Anthony Caminetti, Commissioner General of Immigration, went on record as saying that he was convinced that there were at least 20,000—if not 30,000—Indians in California and the Pacific Coast alone, without considering how many might be elsewhere in the United States. He was a little vague on how that many had arrived in violation of his administration of the immigration laws and fell back on his experience as a Californian with the Chinese. They, too, had come first in small numbers without attracting much attention, but little by little “stealthily they came in, unnoticed by the mass of our people until they became a menace to the whole State and the whole country. This is our experience with oriental immigration... Let American be warned!”<sup>2</sup> These comments emerged in connection with Congressional hearings on proposed legislation to add the ability to read

and write to good health as a requirement for alien entry into the United States, a move designed to rid America of the "undesirable" classes of Asia. The year was 1914, but it took another three years and war hysteria to muster the two-thirds majority to establish the literacy test over the presidential veto.

*Table One*

EAST INDIAN IMMIGRATION INTO THE UNITED STATES<sup>3</sup>  
(1899-1913)

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Admitted</i> | <i>Debarred</i> | <i>Returned</i> |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1899        | 15              | 0               | 0               |
| 1900        | 9               | 0               | 0               |
| 1901        | 20              | 1               | 0               |
| 1902        | 84              | 0               | 0               |
| 1903        | 83              | 0               | 1               |
| 1904        | 258             | 7               | 2               |
| 1905        | 145             | 13              | 0               |
| 1906        | 271             | 24              | 2               |
| 1907        | 1,072           | 417             | 0               |
| 1908        | 1,710           | 438             | 9               |
| 1909        | 337             | 331             | 1               |
| 1910        | 1782            | 411             | 4               |
| 1911        | 517             | 862             | 36              |
| 1912        | 165             | 104             | 11              |
| 1913        | 188             | 236             | 32              |
| Total       | 6,656           | 2,844           | 98              |

Deep concern over immigration, however, had arisen much earlier. The Asiatic Expulsion League, which had been lulled into relative quietude by governmental steps taken to curtail immigration from China and Japan, began to give tongue when it became aware that almost five times more Indians arrived in 1907 than had come in 1906, and in 1908, there were even more.<sup>4</sup> These years, it will be remembered, were the years of famine and agricultural discontent in the Punjāb and the attendant political unrest which resulted in the deportation of Lālā Lājpat Rāi and Ajit Singh. The British imposed more stringent repressive measures in that particular area of north India, from which the overwhelming majority of Indians—notably, the Sikhs—

emigrated to the United States. While the Californians cried for relief, the Department of Labor noted that "the attitude on the part of the people of the Pacific Coast States furnished practically the sole ground upon which the Department could exclude Hindūs under the existing immigration laws which were felt to be inadequate to meet the emergency but the situation called for prompt action and, in the Department's opinion, justified what might perhaps be regarded by some as a strained application of the laws."<sup>5</sup> The "strained application" resulted in more rigid inspection of incoming Indians and temporarily reduced the number of immigrants. The pressure nevertheless subsided, and 1910 saw the largest number ever to enter the United States in a single year. This gave rise to renewed agitation and three influential, wide-circulation magazines—*Collier's*, *Forum*, and *The Survey*—took up the subject.<sup>6</sup> The main objection seemed to be the difficulty in assimilating an almost totally male—and "heathen"—population. The West Coast newspapers echoed the sentiments expressed in the magazines and citizen neighbourhood groups began petitioning their Congressional representatives.<sup>7</sup> The Hindū, as he was called to differentiate him from the indigenous Red Man, was obviously viewed with alarm although his original entry had been under the most auspicious of Christian auspices.

#### THE SWĀMĪS

It was in 1893 that Swāmī Vivekānanda electrified Americans when he appeared at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. His name quickly became almost a household word in the United States, and there appeared Vedāntic centres in New York, Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco (where it was known simply as the Hindū Temple). Vivekānanda won the hearts of all America when he had responded to the question, "Shall the Christian become a Hindū?" by saying, "God forbid: May you become a better Christian."<sup>8</sup> On the whole, the *swāmīs* came off rather well and had much better luck in capturing the religious attention of the Christians than the Christians did in their efforts to bring Hindūs to the Cross. It was the next group which arrived, however, that caused the real concern.

#### THE SIKHS

The arrival of the Sikhs in the United States is associated with the Boxer Rebellion, when these stalwart and adventurous sons of the

Punjāb came to the shores of the Pacific in China and decided to see what was on the other side. Another interpretation is that these brave and proud soldiers were revolted by the idea of slaughtering their fellow Asians and, rather than face the "shame and dishonour" such action would bring down upon them, they took their discharges and crossed over to British Columbia.<sup>9</sup> Having been loyal to the British, they were bewildered at the reception they received in this outpost of the Empire and many of them filtered across the border into the United States. There is yet another reason why the China experience is associated with the Sikh migration to the United States and that is because it is quite likely that the Punjābīs in service heard from their Chinese counterparts stories of jobs which were available and the wealth which could be acquired. This was more than a myth because the Canadian Pacific Railroad Company was actively recruiting labour, and jobs did exist in the fields and mills of Washington, Oregon, and California. The Indians seemed destined to fill the vacuum left when Chinese and Japanese immigration was virtually cut off. As for wealth, the Sikh could earn approximately \$ 2 a day and live for not more than \$ 15 a month. His style of life was what eventually caused the greatest concern to the white man. In Canada, for example, the area in which the Sikhs were quartered was characterized as "a combination of Libby Prison and the Black Hole of Calcuttā, with a touch of Dante's Inferno, and a free fight thrown in."<sup>10</sup> It was reported that in one shack (one-room, of course) six Sikhs occupied one bed and two slept on the floor. Their habits were considered unsanitary and their mere presence an insult. In the United States, Professor H. A. Millis of Stanford University said that the Sikhs were usually paid the lowest wage, did the least work, and required the most supervision of all the races—presumably non-Caucasian—and hence found little favour with the West Coast farmers and ranchers.<sup>11</sup> There was also the problem of the lack of women (there was, for example, only one Hindū woman known to be in the whole of Canada).<sup>12</sup> By contrast, the Indian reporters extolled the Sikhs as energetic, ambitious representatives of the flower of the Indian peasantry.<sup>13</sup> Students likewise were seen in a hallowed light.

#### THE STUDENTS

Students began to appear on the Pacific Coast of the United States during the 1901-1902 academic year and by 1908 eighteen had enrolled

at the University of California at Berkeley.<sup>14</sup> There were also modest concentrations at the Ivy League schools along the Atlantic Coast and perhaps fifteen or twenty Indians in the Middle West, at Chicago, Illinois, and others of the Big Ten schools. They seemed earnest young men, concerned primarily with professional, technical, or commercial educations and represented, for the most part, the kind of diligence and ambition more often associated with the Protestant than the Hindū ethic. There was initially some dismay over the discrimination their dark skins subjected them to and their classification as unenlightened "heathens," but a remarkable number of the Indian students in school in the United States wrote articles for home consumption urging their fellow countrymen to join them. Some of the American universities were described in detail, both as to curricula and environment, and the campus *mores* were explained—up to and including the importance of a heartfelt "sis-boom-bah!" Student writers provided specific instructions for those who intended to come to the United States for higher education, and one Berkeley student went so far as to list the clothing and toilet articles necessary for a journey to and residence in this far away corner of the world. The list was so meticulously complete as to include two shirt studs. Budgetary information and opportunities for self-support also were given.<sup>15</sup>

The British expressed mounting concern over the Indian students in the United States. In 1910, *The Times* viewed the situation with appropriate alarm and characterized one of the student organizations as devoted "chiefly to the study of explosives and to smuggling arms into India." There seems little evidence for this charge as the organization in question was generally considered relatively conservative in its outlook and operations. The other student-based groups discussed actually had no campus connections. *The Times* nevertheless was correct in saying that the American student groups (this included those in Canada as well as in the United States) were in frequent communication with what the British called the "seditious press" in India and maintained contact with counterpart organizations in the homeland.<sup>16</sup> More recently, Arun Coomer Bose has gone into the matter in a more scholarly manner and concluded that the Indian students in the United States lacked effective leadership and financial support and even when they were provided with both by sympathetic Americans the Indians tended to be apathetic and disinterested: "The Indian students, coming from well-to-do families and looking forward to promising futures were poor revolutionary potentials."<sup>17</sup>

Sārangadhār Dās, a student at Berkeley, speaking for the less affluent, offered another explanation : "We, as students in this country, are too busy with our studies and hard struggle for a living to be able to handle politics . . . We don't know anything of the 'revolutionary,' the creation of scaremongers . . . we will never tolerate, like our students in England, the spying system, and, worse than that, the Anglo-Indians and their Indian sycophants to control the strings of our purse."<sup>18</sup> Spies didn't seem to pose a problem at this time. They were contemptuously dismissed as unnecessary in a land where Indians spoke freely and openly in their discussions on "the value of unity, the lessons to be learned from Japan, the importance of industrial progress, the greatness of the American people, the blessings of democracy, the honourableness of manual labour, the meanness of Theodore Roosevelt and the necessity for education, liberal and technical, for the uplifting of the people of India." There was no need to worry about outwitting spies : "We bewilder them by the self-evident sincerity of our utterances." This was Har Dayāl speaking before he had attracted any particular attention to himself.<sup>19</sup> But it was not long before the British replaced the "bewildered" Indian informers ("approvers," as they were called) with one of their own.

#### SERIOUS SURVEILLANCE

Har Dayāl, who arrived in the United States in 1910 after disillusioning experiences in England and France, had the most impressive record of sedition of any of the Indians on the North American continent. Others, like Tāraknāth Dās, were just beginning to build up their reputations as revolutionaries but Har Dayāl was a known cohort (and protégé) of such illustrious expatriate extremists as Shyāmājī Krishnavarmā, Sāvarkar, and Mme. Cama and had caused considerable alarm on his own part in the Punjāb in 1908. In short, his file was fat. A crucial event which occurred in the waning days of 1912 thrust him back into nationalist activities : he suddenly found himself implicated in the attempted bombing of the Viceroy in Delhī. On December 23, Lord Hardinge, implementing the provision earlier announced by King George V for the transfer of the capital of British India from Calcuttā to the old Mughal centre, was in the process of entering Delhī in a triumphant procession when a bomb was thrown which missed the Viceroy but struck his elephant. Although Lord Hardinge did not escape without serious

wounds, the revolutionaries were disappointed at missing the mark but considered the incident something of a triumph in view of the elaborate security measures taken by the police. One account indicates that the route was guarded by 565 armed and uniformed police officers, inspectors, and constables—mounted and unmounted—plus a troop of lancers and 2,500 plain-clothes men.<sup>20</sup>

Word of the assassination attempt did not reach the Berkeley campus until Christmas eve, when, coincidentally, the Indian students at Cal were gathering for a holiday dinner. The event immediately was turned into a gala celebration. When news of the bombing attempt was announced, the students shouted, danced, and sang *Bande Mātaram*. Har Dayāl, at his most eloquent, was the principal speaker. He concluded his stirring remarks by quoting a well-known line from the work of the great Urdū poet, Mīr: “*Pagrī apnī sambhāliyegā . . . Aur bastī nahīn, yeh Dillī hai!*” Roughly translated, this means, “Watch your step: This is not just any town, this is Delhī!”<sup>21</sup> The celebration caused considerable uneasiness in British circles and Canadian officials arranged to send one of their best men, William C. Hopkinson, to the Bay Area on temporary assignment to check on alleged “seditious” activity there. Hopkinson, who had served in the Calcuttā police force and who spoke Hindī fluently, arrived in San Francisco on January 8, 1913. The next day he called on the British Consul-General, who gave him the names of Indian students at Berkeley who had either already given information about the celebration or were willing to do so. Hopkinson also arranged with the Consul-General to take possession of any papers that might be in the agent’s possession should any harm come to him. He had already taken the precaution of registering in a hotel under an assumed name. Hopkinson then presented his credentials to United States immigration officials at Angel Island who assured him that they would be happy to “effect the deportation of some of the Hindū agitators” if sufficient evidence could be produced. He then called on the Special Agent of the United States Department of Justice in San Francisco and, through him, arranged for a register of all mail handled by the Berkeley Post Office either coming from or going to India. On his own, Hopkinson made contact with the *swāmī* at the San Francisco Hindū Temple. From the *swāmī* and student informers he received a full account of “the feast and jollification” of Christmas past and duly cabled his findings to his superiors in Ottawa, followed by a detailed letter report.

As disturbed as Hopkinson was by the joy which had been expressed



at the attempted assassination of the Viceroy, he still had little more than his own concerns to pass along to U. S. immigration officials. Har Dayāl seemed the only possible candidate for deportation and Hopkinson hoped to collect enough evidence of his anarchist activities to turn the trick. Accordingly, he attended Har Dayāl's lectures and reported what he thought he heard but was unable to comprehend much or analyze the synthesis of radical doctrines which had, by now, become Har Dayāl's hallmark. He concluded his report by saying that he was led to believe that Har Dayāl was the most dangerous of all the Indian agitators in the United States. "It is unfortunate," he continued, "that he should be located at Berkeley among the Indian students attending the University of California, as a man of his knowledge and influence and declared Anarchist tendencies is bound to wield a great influence on the young boys at the University."<sup>22</sup> Actually, Hopkinson had proved little. He returned to his post in Canada but would return to the United States more clandestinely for more information after the formation of the Ghadar Party later in the year.

#### EARLIER ATTEMPTS TO MOBILIZE THE SIKHS

Har Dayāl properly can be credited with organizing the Indians on the West Coast and stirring them to nationalist action in what came to be known as the Ghadar movement. Ghadar, most commonly translated as "mutiny," was the name given to the newspaper edited and published by Har Dayāl in the name of the Hindū Association of the Pacific Coast (founded in May, 1913). In a short time this association gave rise to the Ghadar Party, which was not the first or the only nationalist organization on the West Coast to espouse revolutionary activity in India. One of the most interesting figures on the roster of the earlier Hindū National Association was Pāndurang Sadāshiva Khānkhoje, still a young man but already a veteran in West Coast nationalist activities. He had been a protégé of Tilak, who had encouraged him to get military training outside India. Khānkhoje went first to Japan, where he was advised that the Anglo-Japanese alliance precluded an Indian learning modern methods of warfare in that country. He then continued on to California, arriving there in 1908. Indian students in Berkeley discouraged his military ambitions saying that it would be impossible to get such training in the United States. The Berkeley students were wrong: Khānkhoje enrolled in the Tamalpais Military Academy where he was stunned to

discover that technology—with chemicals and weapons developed on principles of modern science—had put warfare beyond the scope of the untutored and unskilled Indians. He did find the books on discipline, quick action, and secrecy to be of some value. Khānkhoje had hoped to continue his education at West Point but discovered that appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point was limited to United States citizens. He was further frustrated when U. S. officials rejected his application for naturalization. But by this time, Khānkhoje was consoled by the conclusion that it would be quite impossible for Indian revolutionaries to equip themselves with modern armament and that any further education in military science was useless in face of the fact that the revolutionaries had, as yet, no army. Further, he had become convinced that a revolution depended on mass support, so he set about to find that support.

With his diploma from the military academy in his pocket, Khānkhoje founded the India Independence League in California. Since the organization was not overwhelmed with membership, he moved from the Bay Area to Portland, Oregon, where he met Pandit Kāshīrām, a wealthy entrepreneur in the lumber labour market, who provided the funds for Khānkhoje's organization and served as its treasurer. Membership soon jumped to 500. Increased enrolment was stimulated by the vigilance of U. S. immigration officials in 1909. Indians hoped for relief in concerted action. Political pressure did not interest Khānkhoje but he found an outlet for his military proclivities by devising ways and means to bring Indians into the United States via Mexico and Canada. This also helped to swell the rolls of his organization. In this activity he met at least one soul-mate, who was to play a significant revolutionary role in India at a later date : Vishnu Ganesh Pingale, an engineering student in Portland. Fascinated by the idea of raising a revolutionary army, Pingale even considered using Mexico as a training ground for troops to be recruited from Sikhs in Oregon and California. The plan never materialized.<sup>23</sup>

Khānkhoje drifted back to the Bay Area as the focus of the India Independence League was diverted from revolutionary activities in India in the future to the immediate problems caused by immigration barriers being raised by both the United States and Canadian authorities. In May, 1910, Canada had passed formal legislation requiring that any Indian immigrant coming to that dominion must arrive as the result of an unbroken voyage from an Indian port (no steamship company provided such services at that time) and that he must have with him a minimum

of § 200. This was the situation when Har Dayāl arrived in the United States but he had then ignored invitations to lead the immigrant Indians on the West Coast in their fight against oppressive legislation. He had been caught up in the labour movement and social revolution in general. So Indian nationalist politics had almost been forgotten. His implication in the Hardinge incident and his realization that he could probably never return to India thrust him back on the revolutionary stage. He now saw in the peasants, farmers, and mill workers the mass support the nationalist movement needed. More than 6,000 East Indians resided in the United States, more than half in California, Washington, and Oregon. Besides, money could be solicited for support of a propaganda programme. Pandit Kāshīrām and others in Oregon invited him to join them in organizing a new association to supplant the now moribund India Independence League and to bring together other similar organizations so that the Indians could speak with one voice. By May, 1913, Har Dayāl had wound up his various non-Indian affairs and was ready. Like Khānkhōje before him, he had no interest in challenging the Governments of Canada and the United States on the immigration issue and hit upon the idea of trying to get a hearing in either the United States or Canada because the British were their real enemies and would counter any such moves. This was a tack that would appeal, as it turned out, because most of the Sikhs now realized that while the Chinese and Japanese Governments had gone to bat for their oppressed nationals, the British Government of India had seemed to support, rather than condemn, any action that would curtail immigration to either Canada or the United States.

#### THE HINDŪ ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC COAST AND GHADAR

A variety of accounts of the organization of the Hindū Association of the Pacific Coast cite different dates and different locations.<sup>24</sup> Each group somehow believed that it was the Alpha Chapter. But what official records there are tend to substantiate that the meeting at which the pan-coastal organization took form was held at Portland, Oregon, towards the end of May, 1913, with Har Dayāl presiding. Those attending agreed that the association would sponsor the publication of a revolutionary newspaper and that funds would be solicited for this end. Travelling secretaries also were named who would move through communities where there were significant numbers of immigrant Indians

to form local units. The Association was an uneasy coalition between the Hindū intellectuals and Sikh farmers, peasants, and lumber mill workers. This does not mean that membership did not include both Muslims and Hindūs of lower classes, but the Sikhs were in the majority (it has been estimated that 90% were Sikhs) and provided most of the financial support to the organization and its proposed programme. Khushwant Singh, who has written a history of the Sikhs and of the Ghadar movement, calls attention to this dichotomy after he tells of the various earlier attempts of the Sikh immigrants to organize through their *Khālsā Dīwān* societies and their network of Sikh temples and committees. They had hoped for redress of their grievances by working through constitutional channels—much as did the moderates in their homeland. Since many of them were ex-soldiers or policemen, “their loyalty to the British Crown was an article of faith,” says Khushwant Singh. But when petitions, memoranda, and pleading by delegates failed to achieve results, he continues, “they were persuaded to lend ear to more radical counsel,” especially that of Har Dayāl, “who was able to persuade the immigrants to give up appealing to Christian sentiment and sending petitions to the English royal family, viceroys, prime ministers and governors.” According to the author, the effective control of the Indian immigrant community was in the hands of the largely illiterate Sikh labouring class who, however, had to have spokesmen who could communicate in English. Hence men like Har Dayāl, Gobind Bihārī Lāl, and Tāraknāth Dās were essential to them. This “dual leadership” made friction inevitable : “The Sikhs looked down upon the Hindūs as English-knowing *Bābūs* and expected them to do as they were told. The Hindūs treated the Sikhs with the contempt a lawyer treats his rustic clients from whom he draws money.” For Khushwant Singh, it was the Sikhs who founded, directed, and supported the West Coast revolutionary movement known as Ghadar.<sup>25</sup> Alive to dispute this claim is Gobind Bihārī Lāl, who came to Berkeley in the summer of 1912 on a scholarship which Har Dayāl had wangled from a temporarily rich Stockton Sikh farmer who later lost everything when the bottom dropped out of the potato market. Lāl, it should be added, was a cousin of Har Dayāl’s wife. He remained with the movement long after Har Dayāl had left and was tried and convicted in the Conspiracy Case brought against the Indians in America for aiding and abetting revolution against Britain—with German funds. Lāl, speaking with a certain degree of authority, claims there would have been no Ghadar

without the Hindūs, although he does give credit to one Sikh, Kartār Singh. He refutes Khushwant Singh at almost every point in rather vehement terms. But there is sufficient evidence to indicate that the role of the Sikhs in the Hindū National Association cannot be discounted. They were certainly the activists, if not the propagandists.

#### COLLUSION

United States immigration officials who had allowed Hopkinson to investigate student activities in Berkeley in 1913 on again countenanced collaboration with the British agent once the revolutionary newspaper hit the streets. This was November 1, 1913, and it was already becoming obvious that an international drama was about to be played out. The year ended for the Hindū Association of the Pacific Coast with an elaborate, enthusiastic, and exciting meeting at which the German connection was presaged and action exhorted. The meeting ended when the fired-up members rose to shout :

*Chalo, chaliye, desh nū yuddha karan,  
Eho ākhiri vachan te farmān ho gaye*

(Come on ! Join us, let us go to fight  
the battle of our freedom : why waste  
time, the final order is given,  
let us go !)<sup>26</sup>

Such commotion alarmed the U. S. immigration officials in San Francisco, who asked for help from Washington. In January of 1914, Samuel W. Backus, United States Commissioner of Immigration at Angel Island, took advantage of a survey that was apparently being conducted from the head office to report not only the number of Hindūs estimated to be in the United States at that time (6,350) but to bring Washington up to date on what was happening in the San Francisco area. He confirmed that the leadership of Ghadar was in the hands of the "student class," a class giving his office "more and more concern as circumstances disclose to us the purpose for which at least a large number of them are in the United States." This purpose, he continued, was "to foment and foster a revolutionary movement in India; to prepare and distribute circulars and pamphlets inciting their countrymen to such a revolution, to prepare and train leaders for the uprising, and to collect funds for the promotion of their plans." He implied

that the department had made a serious mistake in worrying about the illiterate and lower-class labourers when it was the seemingly desirable aliens who were the source of the real trouble. He said :

... it is our purpose hereafter to scrutinize with the greatest care all Hindū applications for admission in order that we may bring the fullest strength of the immigration laws against those who may be coming to join in the movement referred to. It is feared, however, that it will be somewhat difficult to deal with applicants of this character since as a rule they are of much higher type than the ordinary Hindū applicant, and for this reason we would ask that the Bureau give us any advice it has to offer us to assist us in meeting this situation.<sup>27</sup>

Commissioner Backus apparently was unaware that Washington already was making use of Hopkinson to develop files on those Hindūs now considered an embarrassment—if not a threat—to the United States. The Commissioner General of Immigration, whose views on the benighted Hindū have already been expressed, revealed the arrangement when he urged his regional commissioners to provide the Canadian inspector with more detailed information about Indians landing in the United States, adding : “In reciprocation of the courtesy which we are able to extend Mr Hopkinson, he has been furnishing, and will continue to furnish, to the Bureau information that assists it in the enforcement of the law. It is important, however, that the fact that this reciprocal arrangement exists shall not become public.”<sup>28</sup>

The British took the position that the best way to quash the Ghadar movement was to get rid of Har Dayāl, the only man with whom they had had any previous experience. Thus, Hopkinson’s work efforts were focused primarily towards that end. A warrant for Har Dayāl’s arrest was served in late March of 1914, and Hopkinson received almost full credit for nailing him as an “anarchist.” But he was not to furnish information to U.S. authorities very much longer : a Sikh assassinated him in October of 1914. Har Dayāl decamped before his formal deportation hearing was scheduled. Actually, it would never have been held because the charges against him were dropped. If anything, removal of Har Dayāl had the effect opposite to what had been anticipated by either the Americans or the British. Rām Chandra took over and the activist, rather than the propagandist, wing of the party prevailed. With the guns of August, 1914, U.S. military and naval

intelligence moved into the picture to provide historians with a more objective picture of the movement and a more complete roster of those involved. The British continued to press for action against the Ghadarites and this effort culminated in the legal travesty known as the San Francisco Conspiracy Case.

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## AN HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE PUNJĀBĪ SOLDIER IN WORLD WAR I

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When the "Great War" broke out in August, 1914, the British discovered that the demands for manpower in France far exceeded the limited numbers of troops which they had under arms in Britain. In such a crisis, it was natural that the British Government should turn to the large professional army under British colours in India. Although this army had not been prepared for fighting in Europe or Africa, it was a trained army. The Government of India therefore quickly dispatched sections of the Indian Army, including many Indian troops, to the Western Front (the first arriving in Marseilles on September 26, 1914).<sup>1</sup> Although the infantry units were withdrawn in late 1915, cavalry units and some auxiliary units remained until 1918. However, the major "Indian" front was in Mesopotamia, where the Government of India ran the war during its first two years.<sup>2</sup> In 1914 Indian troops were sent to Egypt and East Africa as well,<sup>3</sup> and Indian troops marched through Palestine with Allenby in 1918. They were part of the Gallipoli invasion and some were sent to Salonika in 1918. Other troops were stationed in Aden, the Persian Gulf, and Persia, while smaller units saw service in Hong Kong, Singapore, Ceylon, and other imperial outposts. A few regiments remained in India, primarily to serve on the Northwest Frontier.

Service overseas was not new for Indian soldiers, despite caste and religious restrictions. Indian troops previously had appeared in Cyprus, Egypt, China, the Persian Gulf, and Africa as well as in Burma and Afghānistān. The 24th Punjābī infantry, for example, had seen service in China, Abyssinia, Afghānistān, Egypt, and Tibet.<sup>4</sup>

The extensive Indian involvement in the military side of World War I suggests that the war was likely to have significant impact on aspects of Indian life. My own interest in this facet of Indian history stems from an interest in the changes taking place in India in the early twentieth century. From this viewpoint, the war appears as a major series of events certain to bring added changes and to modify the course of developments already underway, such as the growth of the Indian

National Congress. My previous work centred on changes in British views on India during the 1910-20 decade. From that angle, a study of the Indian experiences during the war serves as a case study of the impact of colonial rule.

World War I had a dramatic effect on the Indian soldier. He was the Indian most directly involved in the war, who bore the brunt of the burdens of war, and who was exposed through the war to unique experiences and to other societies. The value of such an approach to the war period is enhanced by the fact that scholars studying India, both Indian and Western, have neglected the soldier, despite the special features of the Indian Army and the importance of the military in British India. Some scholars have shown interest in the last decade in the military in "developing societies," but this interest deals relatively little with the period prior to 1939. There are various potential values for such a study, some of which will emerge only as the subject is pursued. Here it should be made clear that this is not research in military history. Rather, this essay attempts to examine what the situation of the soldier was in terms of his social and geographic origins, in terms of his living conditions and role in the army as a social institution, and ways in which these were modified during the war. Also, it is an examination of his personal reactions to the military situations in which he found himself, the stresses and strains of war, and the societies in which he was placed. It thus provides a case study of the exposure of ordinary Indians to a set of circumstances beyond their normal experiences, and an example of the response of Indians to other cultures. Implicitly, this suggests that the Indian soldier on his return to India might become an agent for social change. Whether he actually became such is a question which lies beyond this paper, but upon which it will cast some light. There are other possible implications, such as that his attitudes and relations to the British and the British Government may have undergone change. It is likely that this was a factor in the Punjab disturbances in the postwar years, though, again, that is a subject beyond the bounds of this project. It is hoped that this study can assist in explaining some postwar developments.

The sources for this study lie primarily within the Government records held by the India Office Library and the National Archives of India. The most important sources are the following: Annual Caste Returns of the Native Army (India), Reports of the Censor (Indian Mails in France, both printed and in typescript), and the Proceedings of the

Government of India in the Army Department.<sup>5</sup> Another special source consists of the regimental histories so common in the British tradition.<sup>6</sup> In an effort to capture some direct, though distant, personal reminiscences of World War I veterans, now elderly men, Dr S. D. Pradhān, Department of Defence Studies, Punjābī University, and I are carrying out a modest project of interviewing. To date, fifty-eight Indian veterans, mostly in the Punjāb, have been interviewed. Dr Pradhān's interviews have been with men of the lower officer ranks or ordinary sepoy; my own interviews have included a few men who achieved high rank. We plan to extend this project to South India.

#### THE INDIAN ARMY

As has been indicated, the Indian army was a professional army, based on voluntary, long-term enlistment.<sup>7</sup> As is well known, it was drawn overwhelmingly from the so-called "martial classes," a pattern which evolved during the nineteenth century and became firmly established in the 1890's under Lord Roberts. These martial classes may be identified by a list of the classes included in the army in the early years of the war :<sup>8</sup>

Punjābī Muslims  
 Sikhs  
 Pathāns  
 Dogrās  
 Hindustānī Muslims  
 Hindustānī Hindūs  
 Jāts  
 Rājputānā and Central Indian Hindūs and Muslims  
 Marāthās  
 Deccanī Muslims  
 Madrāsīs : Muslims, Hindūs, Christians  
 Garhwālīs  
 Gurkhās  
 Burmans

It is clear that the term "class" as used in this context is generally a very broad one, related to, but far from identical with, caste. Further, it is apparent that the Punjāb was the home of a number of the martial races. In fact, though these classes were quite broad, actual recruiting

was done on a much narrower basis, with men being chosen from rather limited regions, often from specific villages, while other regions were purposely ignored. The "class" recruiting was carried out both by district recruiting officers and by the regiments themselves. The regiments were either class regiments or class company regiments. In the former, all men were drawn from one class, while the latter, the more common type, particular companies were drawn from one or two classes, with companies of different classes being combined into a regiment.

Although we do not have direct evidence to delineate precisely the reasons why Indians joined the army, it is apparent that many of them came from groups which had strong military traditions, the Pathāns, Sikhs, Rājput̄s, and Gurkhās being particularly good examples of this. For these groups, the military way of life was a profession. This overlaps with the villager's view of the army as a good, steady job.

The existence of "class" units within the army constituted probably its most distinctive social feature. The British consciously fostered the sense of class identification through emphasis on group identity, on religious patterns, and on the establishment of a strong esprit de corps, with which the British officers were closely associated. Even more closely associated with such identification, however, were the Indian officers, who came from the class involved. While British officers held the King's Commission, the only Indians to do so were men in the Indian Medical Service and certain honorary officers.<sup>9</sup> The true Indian officers were the Viceroy's Commission Officers (V.C.O.s) and the Non-Commissioned Officers. Indians had some hope of advancement through these channels. The top V.C.O. was the Subedār-Major, an important and somewhat awesome figure, who served the Indian troops as a kind of in-house village elder.

As far as the British troops were concerned, there appears to have been relatively little direct contact with the Indian troops, a pattern generally evident throughout the war. A further element of segregation involved the separation of the cantonment, in many respects, from civilian society.

#### WARTIME CHANGES

When the war began, the Indian Army included 1,52,496 Indian combat soldiers. Of this number, about 1,00,000 were classified as

coming from the Punjāb. At the time of the Armistice in November, 1918, the number of Indian combatants had risen to 5,63,091, of whom about 4,00,000 were Punjābī soldiers. Over the entire course of the war over 8,00,000 Indians served in a combat capacity, with 3,49,688 (42% of the total) from the Punjāb.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to the regular troops, there existed forces (labelled Imperial Service Troops) from some of the Princely states. Some of these contributions were very small, for Lohārū contributed only 378 men while Patiālā contributed 37,020, over 15% of its eligible males.<sup>11</sup>

On turning to the non-combatant troops in the Indian Army, including such categories as craftsmen, porters, syces, sweepers, and bhishtīs, the Punjābī contribution was significantly smaller than in the combat category, only 97,188 men, while the United Provinces contributed the largest number. Generally, the army did not wish recruiting for non-combatants to be widely extended in the Punjāb, though there were exceptions, such as muleteers, who came almost wholly from this area. In total, something over 4,00,000 Indian non-combatants served during the war.

In addition to the regular forces, the British established an Indian Defence Force in 1917 as a type of home militia. Europeans in India generally filled its ranks, but a few Indians were permitted to enroll.

In seeking to understand the changing relationship of the army to Punjāb society during the war, one of the major questions is whether recruiting patterns changed. Changes did occur, but they came slowly and first appeared in the recruitment of non-combatants. The traditional class recruitment continued to 1917, though with gradually widening scope. The army rapidly took in new recruits, at a pace much greater than the typical 15,000 per annum of the prewar years. While the reason why volunteers joined so readily is not fully apparent, the economic opportunity involved and the general climate of support for the war probably were the major factors. Small revolutionary groups sought to take advantage of Britain's struggle to weaken her in India and a few political leaders opposed Indian involvement, but on the whole Indians tended to support the war.

With the continuation of prewar recruitment patterns, it was not surprising that by the end of March, 1917, the Punjāb had contributed 1,17,651 men out of approximately 2,54,000 recruited, while Madrās State had supplied only 15,339 and Bombay 13,110. By contrast, Nepāl had supplied 38,679 men.<sup>12</sup>

The demands of the war for manpower appeared insatiable, and the Government turned to a new method of recruitment. In April, 1917, it established in the Punjāb a system of territorial recruiting, in which army recruiters were given responsibility for a territory corresponding to a political unit, with a quota to meet, and were permitted to take volunteers from new caste or religious groups. This system was soon expanded to other states, making it possible for the army to continue to draw in recruits in large numbers. The recruiting drive also was aided by improved pay and pensions and by the offer of bonuses to new recruits. Naturally the Government continued to draw heavily from the Punjāb, and of the seventy-four new classes listed in the Government's postwar analysis of recruiting during the war, twenty-two were from the Punjāb :<sup>13</sup>

(Where available, the figures for enrolment are indicated.)

|                     |                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Arāins              | Kashmīrīs                   |
| Baltīs              | Māhtam Sikhs                |
| Bauriā Sikhs        | Mussallis 927               |
| Bishnoīs            | Niāzī Pathāns               |
| Gaur Brāhmans 6,845 | Pathāns of Chhachh          |
| Dogrā Jāts          | Punjābī Brāhmans            |
| Herīs (Aherīs       | Punjābī Christians 3,681    |
| Hindū Arorās        | Punjābī Hindūs              |
| Jāgīrdārs (Ambālā)  | Rors                        |
| Kambohs             | Sainīs                      |
| Kanets              | Southwest Punjābī Musalmāns |

Like other such classifications, this one includes classes which were quite varied in nature.<sup>14</sup> In numbers they ranged from the Pathāns of Chhachh and the Baltīs, very small groups, to the Muslim Arāins, numbering approximately a million. The Bishnoīs were a Vaishnavite Hindū sect, the Sainīs included both Hindūs and Sikhs, while the Kambohs included Muslims, Sikhs, and a few Jains. As was to be expected, almost all of the classes were predominantly agricultural. The Arāins, the Sainīs, the Kambohs, and the Pathāns of Chhachh were described as particularly capable cultivators, the first two being noted as market gardeners. The larger groups, such as the Arāins, the Brāhmans, and the Kambohs, included individuals in a variety of occupations. The Arorās tended to be

a mercantile and moneylending class, with extensive landholdings. The Māhtam Sikhs were classified as hunters, as were the outcaste Herīs, but many of the latter were labourers or cultivators. The Mussallīs were a Muslim scavenging class, and the Niāzī Pathāns were also a low-ranking Muslim group. The Kashmīrīs followed their traditional occupation as weavers. The relative socio-economic status of the classes also is revealed by their literacy rates. As reported in the 1921 census, the Arorās and Brāhmans had relatively high literacy rates, over 10%, while the Muslim Kamboh, the Mussallīs, and the Māhtam Sikhs each had less than 1% literacy.

Certainly the British continued to draw primarily upon the village cultivator, who had formed the bulk of the Indian Army for decades. However, the presence of Mussallīs and Kashmīrīs indicates that a greater diversification had become necessary and acceptable. During the latter parts of the war, for example, most Sikh army units would accept recruits from all recruitable classes of Sikhs.

A breakdown by religious categories shows that the major Punjābī religious communities provided men in the following numbers to the combat forces :

Muhammadans : 1,90,078

Hindūs : 83,515

Sikhs : 97,016

Inasmuch as the Sikhs comprised approximately 12% of the population of the province, it is obvious that their proportionate recruitment was exceedingly high. From the Sikh community the Jatt Sikhs sent highest proportion of men to war.

In terms of geographical regions, Rāwalpindī Division was the heaviest contributor both in absolute numbers and in proportion of its manpower, followed by Jullundur, Ambālā, and Lāhore. At the Armistice, 1,14,202 combat troops came from the Rāwalpindī area.

New classes from other regions also were included, for example, the Central Province Mahārs, with 2,365, and the Nāyars, with 3,598. Bengālīs, too, were permitted into the army again at this time, but their total for the war only came to 7,117, a figure so low primarily because of British doubts about the Bengālīs as soldiers.

In securing recruits during the war, the Government used a variety of means. Even before abandoning class recruitment, Government officials had become involved more actively. The British also encouraged Indians

to serve as recruiters. National figures were involved, including such unlikely persons as Mahātmā Gāndhī and Motīlāl Ghosh, editor of the *Amrita Bāzār Patrikā*. Probably of greater significance was the role of local and regional leaders, the most active of whom subsequently received honours and awards of land.<sup>15</sup> It would be worthwhile to study the patterns of individuals who involved themselves in this activity; their role in local society, and their role in the recruiting effort.

One of the most active leaders in recruiting and mobilizing support for the war was the Mahārājā of Paṭiālā, a leading Sikh. In August, 1916, the Mahārājā organized a large meeting on the occasion of the second anniversary of the outbreak of the war, inviting leaders of the Sikh community from around the country. In his speeches he stressed the Sikh "nation," its loyalty to the King-Emperor, and Sikh readiness to fight and die as good warriors. In October, 1916, the Mahārājā held a recruiting Darbār at Bhatindā, presumably just one of a number of darbārs.<sup>16</sup> In 1917-18, he served on the Central Recruiting Board and on its successor, the Indian Soldiers' Board.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the successful expansion of recruiting, in the latter years of the war the British applied a great deal of pressure in the Punjāb to secure recruits. cursory examination of evidence indicates that the Government, while not establishing conscription in the Punjāb, used most of the means at its disposal to encourage and almost force some areas to provide recruits. This was true despite the awareness within the Government (as early as 1917) that the quality of recruits was decreasing.<sup>18</sup> In April, 1918, the Central Recruiting Board decided not to increase the quotas of the Punjāb, the Frontier Province, Ajmer-Merwāra, and Nepāl. From July to October, 1918, the United Provinces provided a larger total of combatant and non-combatant recruits than did the Punjāb, a reversal of previous patterns.

By the last year of the war, this expanded recruitment resulted in the army having a much broader social and regional make-up than previously. It is true that in the postwar era retrenchment removed many of these groups from the army, much to their disappointment. In military terms, almost all of the new groups performed effectively. Special praise was tendered to Burmans, Kumāonīs, Coorgs, Gaur Brāhmans, Hill Brāhmans, Mahārs, and Mazhabī Sikhs. Examples of Punjābī classes which were less successful included some Niāzīs and Chhachhīs.<sup>19</sup> Like the men of the prewar army, these groups were almost all rural in origin. Generally, attempts to use urban groups in combat



proved less fortunate, though they often provided auxiliary and technical services.

Turning from the make-up of the army to the conditions of service, a number of changes occurred, most of which could be called improvements.<sup>20</sup> The total impact of these changes in social and economic terms would be difficult to measure. However, most of them continued after 1918 and thus were permanent results of the war. These changes appear to have had three sources: (1) Adaptation to the needs of wartime service. (2) Attempts to attract recruits through improved pay and conditions. (3) Attempts to bring conditions in line with technical improvements.

From the sepoy's viewpoint, pay probably was the most basic consideration. During the war the sepoy's basic pay remained at rupees eleven per month. However, the army raised the pay of a number of auxiliary and special groups, primarily to attract non-combatant recruits. Moreover, in 1915, soldiers serving in Europe received a 25% bonus, later extended to those in other battle areas. Pay and pensions were increased on January 1, 1917, and an additional bonus added in 1918. It has been estimated that in 1917 payments from men in the army accounted for 4-5,000,000 income to the Punjāb.

The decision to provide free rations for combat troops starting January 1, 1917 related closely to pay.<sup>21</sup> Later in the same year the British issued free clothing, mainly to overcome the complications in attempting to run a system of accounting in wartime.

Because the pension received by a retired soldier was a major consideration in attracting men to the military life, and because Indian soldiers generally had a good record in the war, it is not surprising that pensions were improved during the war, especially for invalided soldiers and for soldiers' widows.<sup>22</sup> In addition, in January, 1918, the Government decided to provide burial expenses for soldiers who died in hospitals or cantonments. Previously the policy had been to pay expenses only for burials of men who died while on field service.<sup>23</sup>

An ancillary action taken by the Government in order to benefit the soldier was the passage of the Indian Soldiers' Litigation Act, 1918, to suspend litigation involving soldiers abroad or about to go abroad.<sup>24</sup>

One of the peculiarities of the Indian army was the sillādār system for the cavalry, a system in which the cavalryman owned his own horse and equipment. He purchased these from the army and then made monthly payments for replacement costs. Most of the cavalry units were on this basis. Obviously it had serious drawbacks for any large-scale

wartime operation, when losses increased drastically, so that it was modified in the process of the war, to be dispensed with after the war. Symbolically, this marked the decline of the old-style Indian cavalry which had played such a distinguished role in Indian military history.

Modest movements towards improved conditions of living were apparent in other areas. For instance, standards of sanitation in hospitals improved, fans were installed, and there was an attempt to attract more professional cooks into hospital service. Fans and electric lights also appeared in some of the barracks for the first time. Other actions related to the families of soldiers. In August, 1915, the Council of the Secretary of State approved funds for setting up cheap grain shops in urban areas of the Punjāb in order to meet the problem of grain shortages.<sup>25</sup> In 1916, funds were allocated for the improvement of the Regimental Schools for Indian units.<sup>26</sup>

These various improvements do not add up to a radical change, but they indicate a certain upgrading for the soldier, possibly moving him slightly upward in the social-economic scale.

Other governmental actions during the war also indicated a changing outlook on the Indian soldier. The basic factor in these shifts was the great contribution which the Indian Army made to the war effort. Most obvious was the accumulation of honours through heroism and service in battle. The first Indian to win a Victoria Cross was Jamādār Khudādād Khān, 129th Duke of Connaught's Own Balūchīs, a Punjābī Muslim from the Jhelum District. The totals of awards gained by Punjābīs are as follows :<sup>27</sup>

|                                    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Victoria Cross                     | : 3 (out of 16 for the Indian Army) |
| Military Cross                     | : 22 (out of 99)                    |
| Order of British India             | : 125                               |
| Indian Order of Merit              | : 374                               |
| Indian Distinguished Service Medal | : 1,137                             |
| Indian Meritorious Service Medal   | : 513                               |
| Miscellaneous rewards              | : 30                                |
| Foreign decorations                | : 210                               |

Awards brought financial allowances, which increased during the war. More substantial rewards took the form of special pensions and land grants, often attached to rewards.<sup>28</sup> Naturally, Punjābīs accumulated honours beyond those of all other regions. For the Indian Army as a whole, there were over 14,000 special pensions and V.C.O.s received 200

*jāgīrs*. The Punjāb Government made available 1,80,000 acres of canal land for distribution to honoured soldiers, with 50 acres allocated to officers and 25 acres to other ranks. Villages which proved especially fertile recruiting ground were given remission of land tax.

While these pensions and land grants certainly played an important role in governmental recognition for the ordinary soldier, other forms of recognition were more symbolic, but had long-range significance in terms of "Indianization" in the Government. For instance, in 1916, in a purposeful gesture to the Indian soldiers, a retired Sūbedār-Major, Ajab Khān, Sardār Bahādur, I.O.M., 76th Punjābīs, a Pathān from Rāwalpindī District, became a member of the Viceroy's Council.<sup>29</sup> Of the seven military men considered for this appointment, three were from the Punjāb.

Of more long-range significance was the decision, made in 1917 after a long period of discussion within the Government, to grant King's Commissions in the regular army to Indians.<sup>30</sup> This included a decision to honour some distinguished soldiers by such appointment and to send a small number of Indians into officers' training. The decision to train young Indians at Indore, Sandhurst, and Dehrā Dūn proved increasingly important. General Cariappā and General Iskander Mirzā, for instance, began their careers in the immediate postwar period. My information on the early Indian King's Commissioned Officers is incomplete, but it appears the Punjābīs may have received fewer nominations than their numbers in the army suggested.<sup>31</sup>

While some of these acknowledgements of the Indian soldier's contributions to the war effort had long-range effect, it is important to consider direct wartime experiences which affected the life of the soldier. First in importance was the possibility of being wounded or killed. The intense fighting in France and in Mesopotamia was most destructive in these regards, while disease was more important in East Africa. The total casualty figures for the Indian Army during the war were approximately 36,000 killed and 70,000 wounded. Because its soldiers served in the army from the beginning and became involved in the most active theatres, the Punjāb suffered significant losses. Total casualties for the Punjāb were approximately 34,000, of whom 12,794 were fatal casualties. This indicates that 2.6% of the Punjābī soldiers died in the war, the same figure as for the army as a whole.<sup>32</sup> Information from the soldiers' letters from Europe indicates that this was felt most deeply in 1915, when the Indian troops were involved in some of the

bloodiest fighting of the early part of the war. An additional factor in the attrition rate was the very high percentage of officers killed. The available evidence suggests that the loss of British officers was felt more strongly, because it was less easy for a new British officer to establish a relationship with his men than it was for a new Indian officer, who usually came from the same unit and class.

Another noteworthy category of men is that of prisoners of war. I have found little information about those who were captured by the Germans, though evidence in the letters suggests reasonably good treatment. The most tragic story was that of the men taken in the siege of Kut-el-Amārā; few of those Indian soldiers survived.

The casualties and the influx of large numbers of new men into the army, as well as the exigencies of battle, brought some breakdown of the sense of identity which had been so carefully cultivated in the pre-war army. However, there is only limited evidence suggesting the effects of this breakdown. It is even more difficult to determine in what ways the war brought the mixing of class and caste. These matters will be dealt with in the final section of the paper.

Closely related to mixing classes are matters of religion. The Government continued to support the religious identity of the units and to provide religious leaders for them. For instance, in 1916, the Government acceded to a request from 200 Punjābī Christian soldiers that it appoint a religious teacher for them.<sup>33</sup> While respecting religious taboos, obviously the Government could not maintain all traditions in the battle areas. An Indian officer who served with the I.M.S. during the war tells a delightful story of seeing a new Brāhman group, with each man cooking his own food first, only to decide in fairly short order that it would be best to have a few men cook for the entire group.<sup>34</sup>

Finally, a note should be included on the political factor in the army. It was a basic thesis of the British view of the army that soldiers should be non-political, and they consciously preferred soldiers who came from areas not actively involved in Indian political movements. It is true that most Indian soldiers were not interested in, nor informed about, politics. However, it is important to recall that the situation in the Punjāb included a modest tradition of political activism, exemplified by Lālā Lājpat Rāi, and that this was increased during the war. The most notable Punjābī political movement was the Ghadar movement, mainly active in the U.S.A., with some of its effects being felt in the Punjāb itself. The revolutionary movement within India sought to bring

defections and risings among the soldiery. Revolutionaries worked in the Northern cantonments and attempted a few minor actions. The Lāhore Conspiracy Case was the main result. In this work of stirring up political ferment against the British, the Germans were involved, but in a very limited degree. While the work of the revolutionaries with the army needs further study, it is apparent that their total impact was slight. If it had a negative effect upon recruiting, it was scarcely discernible.

The situation of the Punjābī Muslim soldier calls for some special consideration. Turkish participation in the war on the side of the Central Powers created tension, especially because of the existence of the "Pan-Islamic" movement in India, expressed so effectively by the Alī brothers. This was supplemented by German machinations, by some Muslim political activities in Afghānistān, and by restlessness among some of the border tribes. On the other hand, the great majority of Muslim spokesmen, headed by the Nizām of Hyderābād and the Āgā Khān, gave strong support to the British war effort.<sup>35</sup> It appears likely that the ordinary Muslim was little affected by these various developments; certainly Punjābī Muslims responded in great numbers to the call for volunteers. In fact, Punjābī Muslims were the single largest "class" in the Indian army, even though their percentage of enrolment was lower than that of the Sikhs.

On the other hand, a few minor incidents of unrest or mutiny involved Muslims. The Afrīdīs and Orakzāis caused some difficulties and their recruiting was reduced. In Singapore, in February, 1915, a company made up of Punjābī and Hindustānī Muslims mutinied after they had been aroused by German prisoners of war. The number involved was small and trouble was quickly suppressed.<sup>36</sup>

The wartime experience of the Indian soldier thus included a variety of elements, most of which implied involvement in, exposure to, or awareness of change. The most obvious part was the death, suffering, and toil involved. Other developments indicate a significant amount of exposure to change and some improvement in the position of the soldier in the army. Such improvement moved forward slowly after the war, while the opportunity, as they regarded it, for new groups to participate in the war was partially withdrawn. Of more significance to Indian history, perhaps, is the question whether the wartime experience made the soldier a somewhat different person and more open to change. This and other topics dealt with thus far will be examined from a

different perspective in the following section.

#### REACTIONS OF THE PUNJĀBĪ SOLDIER TO HIS WARTIME EXPERIENCES

The Censor's reports on the letters of Indian soldiers in France and England provide a uniquely rich source for studying the Indian soldier in his wartime setting.<sup>37</sup> The Censor usually attached a brief note to each set of weekly or fortnightly reports. In the report he included a number of excerpts from individual letters. Fortunately the Censor viewed his task broadly, examining the letters not only for dangerous military information, of which there apparently was little, but also for material indicating the soldier's state of mind, morale, and interests. Since these excerpts number in the hundreds, it is possible to secure a broad-gauge picture of the soldier's outlook. Nearly half of the excerpts were from Punjābī soldiers. For this study I have selected those soldiers who can be clearly identified with the Punjāb, excluding Pathāns, for example, unless this identification is possible.

Unfortunately, precise information on the task and scope of the Censor's work is not available, but that does not detract significantly from the value of the excerpts. All of the letters were printed in English. In almost all cases the original language was recorded (usually Urdū, Gurmukhī, or Hindi). This means that we are reading a translation made by a British officer familiar with the Indian languages or by his Indian assistant. While Indian Medical Service officers helped censor soldiers' letters at the regimental level, British officers were in charge of the central process represented herein, apparently handled at Boulogne.

Another feature is that the letters usually must have been written by the few literate soldiers in each company. Most of the Indians in the army were illiterate. The actual writer may have been a clerk, store-keeper, or medical assistant. Presumably this practice had little effect upon the content of the letters.

The Censor's decision to include a fair number of letters written to the soldiers in Europe increases the richness of this source. Most of these came from family and friends in India, but a modest number came from friends in military units stationed elsewhere.

The inclusion of letters from England calls for a brief explanation. Most of the letters from England were written in 1915, from men located in the hospitals for Indian soldiers, after having been wounded in the

fierce fighting in France. Subsequently a few soldiers received leave in England, and a small number became members of the King's escort in 1917.

In discussing the material in these letters, three topics will be dealt with : (1) Response to the war and to the military situation. (2) Relations with other Indians and other soldiers. (3) Observations on French and English society, with a few comments on other societies.

It has been said above that the Indian soldier was a professional and the letters bear this out, even the new soldier. Many of the responses relating to the war indicate a professionalism sharpened by war. Probably the most pervasive theme might be called one of duty. There was a strong feeling among many soldiers of their military tradition and that it was proper that they serve the Sircār or the King in battle. The term "izzat" or "pride" was seldom used in the translations, but one Punjābī Muslim averred that "I am suffering for one end only, *izzat*. My duty is to help Government and increase the reputation of our family."<sup>38</sup> This sense of duty and pride was combined with an awareness of the rewards associated with service, superbly expressed by a retired Punjābī Muslim soldier writing to friends serving in France :

... you know that for three or four generations we have been eating the salt of the British Government. It is the time to pay for the Government and make a name for yourselves and your ancestors. . . Never regret for a moment your loyalty and devotion to Government. Look at those who have displayed their loyalty to Government, how they have been given rewards with lands and honours.<sup>39</sup>

Frequently the sense of military tradition was matched with the view that it was God's will that soldiers should fight and that battle and death are a soldier's proper lot. The general attitude towards serving King and Government often was evoked in prayers for the victory of the King and success over the German. In most cases the Indian soldier did not express any particular feelings about the Germans, except that they should be defeated. It is unusual to discover such a strong statement as that by a Sikh in the Indian Medical Service, that "the German is ignorant, brutal, savage, and a wild animal."<sup>40</sup>

Despite the Indian soldier's commitment to his task, the bloody trench warfare of 1915 made a deep impression, leading many to see it as a truly cataclysmic event. A Sikh expressed the feeling that "this war is

like the war which Hanumān made,"<sup>41</sup> and from a Dogrā came the view that "this war is like a furnace in which every thing becomes ashes on both sides."<sup>42</sup> After the infantry left this front, in late 1915, this kind of comment appeared only rarely in correspondence.

While the battle itself made the deepest impression on soldiers in 1915, the climate of France in fall and winter affected everyone. The mixtures of cold, rain, and snow were often complained of in 1914 and 1915. By 1917, when fewer Indian troops were in France and when the Government had managed to supply Indian troops with war clothing, comments on the cold were matched with praise for the Government's consideration. Soldiers on other fronts had their own climatic burdens. In Mesopotamia it was heat, cold, and the dryness of the desert; in East Africa it was the tsetse fly, the bush, and the heat.

Given the hardships which the Indian soldier faced, it may seem surprising that there were not more problems of morale, malingering, and desertion. Apparently there were no cases of Punjābī desertion. Negative reactions by Indian soldiers in France took the form most frequently of writing to discourage enlistment by other members of the family and of the desire to be sent back to India or to other theatres. In one instance a Punjābī soldier urged his family in India to send him something which would permit him to feign illness. The negative feelings about being in France appeared mainly in the early years of the war. In addition, the opposition to enlistment in the army was more than offset by letters urging enlistment and recruitment, often for the purpose of strengthening the position of caste or class. In turn, during the last year of the war, reports of pressure being used for recruitment in the Punjāb appeared frequently in letters from India and were mentioned critically by soldiers in France.

The hardships and the Indian soldier's ability to overcome them also evoked an increasing number of favourable and prideful comments. Herein lies one of the significant psychological aspects of the war, the Indian soldier's increased self-confidence, which has been strongly expressed by the veterans in their comments on the position of the Indian soldier vis-a-vis the British soldier. Undoubtedly, this growth of confidence, in this type of situation, must have remained with many Indian soldiers after the war as they faced the problems of their own lives and the changing political situation in the Punjāb.

The Punjābī soldier's professionalism also seems to be represented in his reaction to new technology and weaponry. He was interested, noted



their destructive military ability, commented favourably on many, but seemed to approach them in a workmanlike manner, ready to use them as he had the opportunity. The new rifles and machine-guns were most valuable to him. The new mechanisms which evoked most surprise were the submarine and the airplane. One wounded Sikh soldier described the new warfare in these terms :

Here flying ships of various kinds are manoeuvring overhead and dropping bombs. Hundreds of kinds of guns are firing. Here maxim guns are being discharged, there bombs are being thrown by hand... In some places the scoundrel Germans are loosing poisonous gas and liquid fire upon us. Elsewhere the flying craft are fighting a battle among themselves.<sup>43</sup>

The Indian soldier also had practical, personal considerations on his mind. He rarely mentioned concern with honours, but he commented regularly on pay, promotion, food, and clothing. The most frequent complaints about pay appeared in 1915 when it seems that a number of families at home had not received their badly-needed allowances. Complaints over lack of promotion appeared sporadically. Complaints about food and clothing were most common in 1915, while in 1917 the response to the new policies of free rations and clothing and of improved pay and pensions was enthusiastic. The most serious complaint after 1915 was the failure to obtain leave and the long separation from family. Some troops were sent home, but many soldiers and units remained either in France or overseas until the end of the war. A good many of these, however, stated that they were bound to serve the King until victory; a few enjoyed the delights of France so much that they did not wish to leave.

While the nature of caste and class mixing during the war and of relations between Indians and other soldiers is one of the most intriguing in this study, frustratingly little information about it can be found in the letters. Most soldiers apparently had contact with units with which they already were familiar and did not mix freely very often with soldiers who were not Indian. There are few direct references in letters from Europe about the new classes or new recruits who entered the army. One Jāt soldier complained about the weakening of a Jāt regiment by the inclusion of non-Jāts, and another soldier violently objected to any recruiting of Anglo-Indians. However, the veterans recently interviewed say that they met many groups of Indians, including some of

the new classes. Moreover, they consistently speak of getting along "like brothers" with other Indians; in 1915 one Punjābī Muslim wrote that "we are very well united in spite of the religious differences."<sup>44</sup> Battle conditions, travel, and life in the hospital must have provided occasions for mixing. One *sowār*, writing about a trip from Marseilles, noted that in Paris :

We all ate at the same table. Our company was composed of five sepoys of whom three were Sikhs and two Musalmāns, two sweepers and three cooks but we all ate together at the same table. Moreover, we have often eaten food and drunk tea prepared by Musalmāns. If you look at the conditions of things in this country you cannot but see that all the men here are considered equal in the sight of God.<sup>45</sup>

Complaints about problems in maintaining caste or religious purity were much less common, but one Jāt, hospitalized in England, complained that :

I always weep when food time comes for I suffer terribly in respect of my food. Here they cook meat for both Hindūs and Mahomedans in the same kitchen. And the men who cook the meat make my chapāttīs. I can't bear the idea of eating under such circumstances.<sup>46</sup>

Another religious problem faced the Sikh soldier when he was asked to wear a helmet; apparently his refusal to do so was respected.

The veterans we have interviewed have said consistently that they were able to practise their religion except in battle conditions. Moreover, they indicate that the British officers often joined in their religious ceremonies, a pattern existing before the war. Unfortunately, there is little specific material relating to the religious leaders who served with the troops, except for the affirmation of the veterans that they had such leaders at their bases.

Information in the letters on religious practices and beliefs is very limited, appearing most frequently in letters from Muslim soldiers. References to "God" or to the "Gurū" are frequent, but they indicate little more than basic belief and faith. A peculiar situation arose at one point in the war when some men of the 15th Lancers apparently were led by their Indian officers to be concerned about fighting on sacred ground in Mesopotamia. This led to their being sent to the Andamān

Islands on restriction, though they later were restored to proper standing. A few Indian soldiers expressed changing ideas about religion as a result of their French experiences. One Muslim was disturbed that :

In India we have 50 religions, each of which claims that whatever God has created in the world is for it only; everyone outside that particular sect is an unbeliever, a *rākshasa* and an heir of damnation. . . But when you go out and see the world you realize how false is all this bragging. God is not the God of any particular religion, but he has the same regard for everyone.<sup>47</sup>

Another area of special importance is that of the political interests, if any, of the Indian soldiers. Although comments on politics were almost totally absent in the early years of the war, a few did appear in 1917 and 1918. One soldier expressed interest in the Muslim League, one criticized the Ghadar movement, and another criticized Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjāb. One Punjābī Muslim sent to a newspaper an article condemning British pacifists and declaring that Indian Muslims fought for Britain in the war "because they love the British Empire, they value the blessings of British rule."<sup>48</sup> Two Indian soldiers declared that they wished to write books telling about India and the war.

When we turn to the question of Indian-British relationships, the picture tends to be sketchy. A few references to friendly mixing are offset by reports of aloofness, prejudice, or unfair treatment by British soldiers. By contrast the few comments on contact with French, Belgian, Australian, and Russian soldiers are uniformly favourable, speaking about the friendliness of these troops.

While it is impossible to determine with any precision how group mixing in the wartime experience may have opened the Punjābī soldier to easier relations with other groups, the picture of his response to French and English societies is much clearer. From the perspective of a study seeking to evaluate the soldier's experience as a factor leading towards change, this response is of special significance. Here the soldier was confronted with societies about which he had only vague, often incorrect, notions, and which were quite different from his own society.

Punjābī soldiers spent much more time in France than in England, and their comments on France ranged more widely. Perhaps ninety per cent of their comments on France and French life were favourable and many were enthusiastic. Occasionally a Punjābī soldier would refer to

France, and less frequently to England, as "Paradise." The tone of the Indian soldier's relationship with the French was set when the first Indian troops arrived in Marseilles and received a heroes' welcome. Not only were they welcomed, but throughout the war the French with whom they came in contact, mainly civilians, treated them with unwonted friendliness and a spirit of equality. A number of the soldiers lived in the homes of the French, so their contact was extensive. Coming after their experiences in India, in which the Europeans, even the British foot soldier, always appeared in a superior position, this friendliness was particularly heart-warming to the soldiers.

The Punjābī's observation of French women represents a very special aspect of this easy association with the French people. Apparently most soldiers found that the French women were able to accept them on a footing which was friendly and, in most cases, dignified. They commented on the natural openness of French women, both with French men and with Indian men. Some associations naturally became more intimate, though the picture is tantalizingly obscure. Some men said that French women readily fell in love with them, and there were a few marriages. One wonders how many of these war brides returned to the Punjāb. There are fewer references to prostitution; both the soldiers and the censor seemed to slur over such matters.

There are two other especially interesting observations made by the soldiers about females in France. One was the willingness of French women to work hard and to carry on bravely despite the absence or death of their husbands. Quite different was their overwhelmingly favourable response both to the education of girls and to education in general. One Jāt bewailed that :

I know well that a woman in our country is of no more value than a pair of shoes, and this is the reason why the people of India are low in the scale. . . . When I look at Europe I bewail the lot of India. In Europe every one, man and woman, boys and girls, are educated. . . . You ought to educate your girls as well as your boys. . . .<sup>49</sup>

Less personal aspects of French society which were favourably viewed by the soldiers included agriculture, the high standard of living (especially in the cities), cleanliness, the set prices of goods, the willingness to do menial work, and the custom of saying "*merci*." At the end of the war, however, some became depressed by the devastation wreaked on France by the war. Punjābī soldiers made a few negative comments

on France. Some Muslims were offended by the eating of pork and by the "idolatry" which they saw, while a few soldiers complained that they were unhappy because they could not understand the French language.

The exposure to French society, its personal relations, its education, its economy, and its technology, was the factor in the wartime experience which most clearly would have predisposed the Punjābī soldier to become an agent for change in his own society. This conclusion is, for the most part, an inference from the material available, but towards the end of the war an occasional soldier expressed it directly. In 1917 a Jāt Risāldār wrote feelingly that :

My prayer is that you will give up your foolish customs and extravagant expenses and if you love your country you will get others to follow your example.<sup>50</sup>

And just before the cavalry left France in the spring of 1918, a Sikh cavalryman avowed that :

If God spares me to return, I intend to start new customs. Look, in our country people ruin themselves over marriages and lawsuits. In this country rich and poor, high and low, go to church together and worship, and there is no distinction between them there. . . The very best custom in this country is that a man chooses his own wife, and a woman her husband.<sup>51</sup>

In the light of this material it would be worthwhile to examine whether the specific French impetus is traceable in Punjābī village life after the war.<sup>52</sup>

Fewer Punjābī soldiers had an opportunity to see England, and many of the wounded soldiers were confined to the hospitals or their environs—in Brighton, Brockenhurst, or Milton. As wounded war heroes, they received warm treatment from some English men and women, and the King and Queen occasionally visited the hospital wards. However, there are counternotes on restrictions imposed on their movement and of a sense of superiority evidenced by some British. There are a few intriguing references to the friendliness of young ladies.

The most enthusiastic notes were reserved for London. There the wonders of modern technology, the high standard of living, and the grandeur of the city impressed themselves on Indian minds. They were amazed, for instance, at subways and cigarette lighters.

The experience with Britishers on their home ground often favourably

impressed the Punjābī soldiers. While some previous prejudices against the British were confirmed, the interaction tended to reinforce the view of Europeans as advanced and as possessing in their lives many features and goods which the Indian soldier would delight to have.

It is difficult to estimate to what degree this kind of experience led Indian soldiers to feel that they should be given more opportunity to reach European levels of living and more freedom and equality in their relations with the British. Most of the letters are silent on this point, with a few notable exceptions. However, the veterans frequently refer to the wartime experience as producing in them a desire for more equal treatment. Though stated long after the event, this suggests what probably was an implicit movement in the minds of many Indian soldiers. This point may be of significance in relation to the political and religious agitation in the Punjāb in the postwar period.

It is possible, also, to gain through the excerpts a few insights about Indian responses to other societies. Of these the majority related to the "Middle East." The report on relations with people in the battle areas and the conquered areas was mixed. Many times the people in Mesopotamia were found to be unfriendly, but at the end of the war there appears to have been a number of more pleasant contacts. However, regulations kept the soldier from mixing easily and extensively with local peoples. Punjābī soldiers admired Cairo, Baghdād, and Istanbul, and a few fortunate Muslim soldiers were thrilled with an opportunity to visit Meccā. Some soldiers found women in these areas to be particularly beautiful. Beyond this, there is little information.

In summary, the experiences of wartime broadened the Punjābī soldiers and opened their eyes to new things, new ways of life and to some of their own potentialities. As one veteran has put it (through the words recorded by the interviewer) :

The new ideas which the Indian soldiers took from the soldiers and peoples of other countries were remarkable. The Indian soldiers who had no courage to speak before the British started protesting against them in connection with their salaries and other issues. They demanded that there should be the Indian officers also in the Indian Army. They raised the voice against the injustice of inequality. . . So the Indian soldiers had become more wise and sensible after the War.<sup>53</sup>

It is impossible at this point to say what this all added up to, for that could only be determined by study of the postwar situation in the

Punjab, particularly in the villages to which men returned after the war. Clearly the experiences of the war moved in the same general direction, towards "modernization," in which other pressures in Indian life were moving. The study has cast light on a relatively unknown segment of Indian society in an unusual, extended, and changing situation. Hopefully, its results can enlighten other research on the Punjab and suggest new lines of investigation.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

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3. The Indian role in East Africa is presented in: Satyendra Dev Pradhān, "The Role of the Indian Army in the East African Campaign during the First World War." (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Lucknow University, 1971).
4. Major Donovan Jackson, *India's Army* (London: 1940), pp. 331-38. Jackson's book is a helpful reference work, a unit-by-unit summary, with notes on histories and class composition.
5. The Annual Caste Returns (L/MIL/14) and Censor's Reports (L/MIL/5) are in the India Office Library. The Army Department Proceedings are in the National Archives of India (except for parts which have been lost or destroyed or parts which may still be held by the Indian Ministry of Defence.). Other important holdings in the India Office Library are: Military Despatches to and from India (L/MIL/213-236, 1116-18, 2149-55); Indian Army List (L/MIL/17), a series of Handbooks for the Indian Army (L/MIL/17), and the Chelmsford Collection (MSS Eur. E264). In the National Archives of India, the additional major source is Proceedings of the Government of India in the Home Department (Political).
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  8. *Recruiting in India before and during the War of 1914-18*, Army Headquarters, India, 1919, p. 64. This is a highly informative source. Other official reports which are relevant to recruiting and to related matters are : *The Army in India and its Evolution* (Calcuttā : Supt. Govt. Printing, India, 1924), "Report of the Committee to inquire into the Administration and Organization of the Army in India," Cmd. 943 (1920) (The Esher Committee). The Annual Caste returns at the time of the war included the following categories for listing Indian soldiers. Punjābī Musalmāns : Rājput, Awāns, Jāts, Gakkars, Gujars, Moghals, Balūch, Sayads, Tiwānās, Khattars, Tanaolīs, Multānī and Derājāt Pathāns, Mishwānīs, Sūdhans, Dhunds, Jaduns, Karrals, and Other Punjābī Musalmāns. Sikhs and Hindūs : Jāts (Mājhā, Mālwā, Doābā), Khatris, Labānās, Mahtons, Kamboh, Sainīs, Āhlwāliās, Jhiwars, Mazhabīs, Rām-dāsīās, Brāhmans, Tarkhāns, Tirāh Sikhs, and Other Sikhs. For Hindū Rājput, Brāhmans, Ahirs, and Gujars, there were separate listings for trans-Sutlej Punjāb, cis-Sutlej Punjāb, and for groups outside the Punjāb. Annual Caste Returns, 1914-1919, *passim*. An informative and critical evaluation of the martial races concept was given by Nirad Chaudhuri, "The Martial Races of India," *The Modern Review*, 48 (July, 1930), pp. 41-51; (September, 1930), pp. 295-307; 49 (January, 1931), pp. 67-76; (February, 1931), pp. 215-28. The third article dealt with World War I.
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  29. Army Dept. Proc., Oct., 1916, Nos. 1567-79. In January, 1918, Ajab Khān submitted to the Government a set of proposals "for the well-being and contentment of the Indian Army," relating mainly to land grants, openings for Indian officers, and political representation. Chelmsford Coll., vol. 20, pp. 32a-33, 45-47.
  30. See, e.g., Secretary of State to Viceroy, November 18, 1915, Hardinge Papers, Cambridge University Library, vol. 103, Part I, p. 909. B. Duff, "Commission for Indians," November 29, 1915, *Ibid.*, vol. 90, Part I, 406-8. Council of India. Minutes, 1918, vol. 144, June 4, 1918.
  31. I have interviewed Colonel Bedī, a member of the second group of Indian nominees to Sandhurst, who was the son of a Sikh religious leader. He subsequently turned to the political service. Interview. Bangalore, February 14, 1970.
  32. *Punjāb and the War*, p. 104.
  33. Army Dept. Proc., Nov., 1916, Nos. 1454-55.
  34. Interview with Major-General M. G. Bhandāri, I.M.S. (Retired), Bombay,

February 20, 1970.

35. Numerous statements of Muslim support for the war effort are contained in the Proceedings of the Home Department (Political) in the early months of the war.
36. R. W. Mosbergen, "The Sepoy Rebellion : A History of the Singapore Mutiny, 1915." (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Malaya, now University of Singapore, 1954).
37. Material for this paper is drawn from the printed portion of the Censor's reports, which are in two parts : "Further Extracts from Letters forwarded by the Censor, Indian Mails in France," (cited as CFE) and "Supplementary Letters forwarded by the Censor, Indian Mails in France" (cited as CSL). The dates given are the dates of the reports; the actual dates of the letters preceded the report usually by a week or two.

An interesting and realistic portrayal of a Punjābi soldier in the war is the novel by Mulk Rāj Ānand, *Across the Black Water*.

One young man from the Punjāb had a unique experience in the war. Mr H. S. Malik, former member of the I.C.S. and former Indian ambassador to France, graduated from Balliol in 1915. Prevented at first from joining his classmates in the British military service by the policies of the India Office, he finally was able to join the Royal Flying Corps and served in France for the remainder of the war. Interview, New Delhi, March 21, 1969.

38. CSL, October 31, 1917, p. 362.
39. CFE, June 26, 1915, p. 64.
40. CSL, June 2, 1917, p. 297.
41. CFE, January 23, 1915, p. 6.
42. CFE, April 3, 1915, p. 36.
43. CFE, August 9, 1915, p. 73.
44. CFE, May 1, 1915, p. 48.
45. CSL, July 22, 1916, p. 197.
46. CSL, March 11, 1916, p. 158.
47. CSL, March 11, 1916, p. 158.
48. CSL, March 27, 1918, p. 409.
49. CSL, December 5, 1916, p. 235.
50. CSL, September 3, 1917, p. 346.
51. CSL, March 12, 1918, p. 402.
52. After the war Malcolm Darling, I.C.S., a close observer in the Punjāb, noted the drinking of tea and the growing of orchards as reflections of the soldiers' life abroad during the war (*The Punjāb Peasant in Prosperity and Debt* [London : 1947, 4th ed.], pp. 135, 138). Dr Gandā Singh, who served in the army at the end of the war, also has indicated that Indian soldiers were influenced towards change, especially in agriculture, by their experiences in France (Interview, Patiālā, March 8, 1970).
53. S. D. Pradhān. Interview with a retired Havildār Major, Sangrūr district, 1972.

THE HINDUSTĀN SOCIALIST REPUBLICAN ARMY :  
A REVOLUTIONARY ARM OF THE FREEDOM  
MOVEMENT

CORINNE FRIEND

The creed of nonviolence and the personality of Mahātmā Gāndhī so overshadowed all others in the struggle for Indian independence that, until recently, very little attention has been given to the contribution of the revolutionaries to the freedom movement. Revolutionary movements, which played their part side by side with the Congress struggle for freedom, were suppressed by the British-Indian Government, denounced by Gāndhijī and the Congress, and were unable to gain active mass support. Therefore, when freedom was won, it was fashionable and appealing to hail India's sovereignty as a triumph of nonviolence. This elevated the moral tone of India above other nations; it offered a political prescription to the underprivileged of the world, and it enjoyed the approval of the privileged. However, recently social scientists have been reassessing the role played by revolutionaries in the freedom movement.

The Hindustān Socialist Republican Army, organized under Punjābī leadership in 1928 and operating mainly in the Punjāb, was one of the most important revolutionary movements in India. The H. S. R. A. was organized by Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Bhagvatī Charan, and later led by Yashpāl—all students at Punjāb National College. These leaders articulated and publicized the twin goals of H.S.R.A., which were liberation from foreign rule and the restructuring of Indian society along socialist principles. In formulating the latter ideal as an absolute requisite for India, they contributed an important dimension to the freedom movement—one which has since been adopted by free India. That these egalitarian ideals were first formulated by Punjābī leadership can be credited to a number of specifically Punjāb influences—the influence of the early Ārya Samāj and Akālī reformation which coupled pride in nationalism with socially egalitarian principles and the spirit of open and free intellectual inquiry at Punjāb National College. The H.S.R.A. was destroyed by

1932, its leaders hanged or killed or imprisoned. Although the organization died out, its ideas and ideals were taken up by others to become part of other organizations which survived.

It has been very difficult in the past to measure the effectiveness of the Punjab revolutionaries in influencing Indian opinion. In part this was true because the revolutionary group was small even at the outset and the few who survived could not tell of their activities until India was free for fear of endangering others. Official reports and yearbooks necessarily viewed events from the outside, from immediate results and from official bias. Indian newspapers, even where sympathetic to the cause of the revolutionaries, operated under severe legal strictures. Therefore, only since India has been free have the few survivors of the revolutionary movement had the opportunity to tell of the events in which they participated. A valuable contribution to the literature of revolution is *Sinhāvalokan* in Hindī by Yashpāl, the famous Hindī novelist and essayist, providing a firsthand account of the ideology, activities and internal working of the Hindustān Socialist Republican Army.<sup>1</sup>

H. S. R. A. is best known for three incidents: the murder of J. P. Saunders, Assistant Superintendent of Police in Lāhore, on December 17, 1928, in retaliation for his attack on Lālā Lājpat Rāi; the Assembly Bomb incident on April 8, 1929, protesting the certification by the Viceroy of two bills which had been rejected by the Assembly; and the bombing of the Viceroy's train on December 23, 1929.

In *Sinhāvalokan*, Yashpāl considered first why these young men became revolutionaries—why did they not instead join the Congress movement which functioned openly and enjoyed public approval? Why did they choose a life of secret planning, constantly hunted by police—and when caught were hanged, or sentenced to long prison terms?<sup>2</sup>

He observed that revolutionaries were different both in background and in temperament. Bhagat Singh's father, for example, although a Sikh, supported the Ārya Samāj when it was a socially revolutionary movement. His uncle, Ajīt Singh, was deported for anti-British activities. Yashpāl felt that the revolutionaries were more sensitive to the suffering of the people. In his own life, his feeling of hostility towards the British began when he was still a young child because of their arrogance and power and the symbols of subservience they demanded from Indians. He explains the difference in temperament of the revolutionaries in Hindū terms: Just as the ascetic desires union with God by total submergence of his identity in God, so does the revolutionary

wish to be totally submerged in the cause he believes in. However, the objects of his devotion are his country and his people.<sup>3</sup>

Yashpāl was born in December, 1903, in a village in the Kāngrā hills of poor parents. His mother had received education through the Ārya Samāj and was determined that her two sons (he was the elder) should be educated. She sent him to the Gurukul near Hardwār on a "freeship" when he was seven years old. The Gurukul, run by the Ārya Samāj according to its own beliefs, had a profound effect on his development :

My clearest memory of the Gurukul was its atmosphere of hostility to British and foreign rule. Even at that age—Heaven knows what inspired it—we firmly believed we would be able to drive the British out of our country . . . Not only that, we also assumed that Indians would go to England to rule there. The basis for our naive assumptions was that we learned in Gurukul, the substance of which was that the Vedas were the source of the world's entire knowledge. No race of any country could be greater than the chanters of the Vedas, the Āryans of India. There was a time in the past when the whole world was under Āryan rule. Laxity crept into the Vedic religion causing the downfall of the Āryans. That is why first the Muslims and now British ruled our country. But the Āryan people would soon arise and again rule the world.<sup>4</sup>

In the isolation of Hardwār, pride in Indian achievement was fostered and opposition to the British freely expressed. Yashpāl lived and studied there for seven years, but, on account of illness, had to leave to join his mother in Lāhore where she was teaching in an Ārya Samāj girls' school. Later, they moved to Ferozepore Cantonment where again his mother taught in an Ārya Samāj school while he attended high school. The ideals of public service and social liberalism were an important feature of his upbringing. He went to high school during the day, but at night, as a volunteer, he taught untouchable boys to read and write in an Ārya Samāj school. Later, he was paid eight rupees a month to run the night school.

1921 was an exciting year politically. Mahātmā Gāndhī launched a Civil Disobedience campaign, and in the Punjāb, outraged by the massacre at Jallīānwālā Bāgh and oppressed by the Rowlatt Acts, enthusiasm ran high. Yashpāl joined Congress as a volunteer, gave speeches, and read economics and history to give his talks greater content. On account of Chaurī-Chaurā in February, 1922, the Civil

Disobedience movement was suddenly called off, but he had faith in the Congress movement and, after graduating from high school in the spring, went to the villages for several months to speak to the people of independence and freedom. When the villagers asked him how independence would benefit them, he had no answer because increasingly he felt that Congress had no programme which addressed itself to the poverty of the peasantry. He felt that the reason for this was Gāndhījī's innate conservatism and unwillingness to threaten landed vested interests.<sup>5</sup>

He came home thoroughly discouraged but more knowledgeable of village needs. On his return he learned that he stood first in his school in the matriculation examination and was offered a scholarship at a government college. He refused it, but instead entered Punjāb National College which had been founded by Lālā Lājpat Rāi in Lāhore to train young men in social service. Here no scholarship and no financial help was available, nor any training for the professions. Public service was the ideal—not government service.

The person who exerted the greatest influence on the students at National College was their political science professor, Jaichandra Vidyā-lankār. He was a focal point for the young men who were later to belong to H. S. R. A.—Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Bhagvatī Charan and Yashpāl. Class discussions centred on the Civil Disobedience movement of 1921-22. The class concluded that it was a failure and explored alternative ways to achieve freedom. This quest for alternatives led them to read Rousseau, Voltaire, the lives of Mazzini and Garibaldi, the history of the French revolution and the Irish struggle for freedom, Sachīndranāth Sānyāl's *Life in Jail* and the Rowlatt Committee *Report*. The *Report* portrayed Indian revolutionaries as criminals. However, the students saw them in a different light :

We came to the conclusion that in the circumstances they had taken the natural course, and also that there was a wide scope for these activities. We also learned something about the ways and means of revolution.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, their political talks led them to discussions of socialism and the Russian revolution. The Dwārkanāth Library, which Lājpat Rāi had established in honour of his father, contained an abundance of literature and journals on current affairs.<sup>7</sup>

Punjāb youth responded to the political conservatism of Congress by

founding the Naujawān Bhārat Sabhā in 1925 under the leadership of Jaichandra Vidyālakār, Bhagat Singh and Bhagvatī Charan. The Sabhā, which had socialist political convictions, also took radical measures to break down intercaste and religious barriers by organizing community dining where all ate together irrespective of caste or religion. However, some of the men wanted to take a more activist role and to recruit others from Naujawān Bhārat Sabhā for secret revolutionary work. Jaichandra opposed this and Bhagat Singh, impatient with what he regarded as Jaichandra's timidity and inaction, went to Kānpur to establish a connection with the Hindustān Republican Association, a revolutionary organization active in U. P. He arrived in Kānpur shortly after the Kākori dacoity in August, 1925, and was advised to leave immediately since the police were actively searching for all who might have had anything to do with the robbery.<sup>8</sup>

Several years later, after repeated attempts, the Punjāb group met with some of the earlier revolutionaries in September, 1928, to form the Hindustān Socialist Republican Army (or Association). Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev proposed that the new organization include the word "socialist" in its name, indicating its all-India concern, its non-communal nature, and the influence of the Russian revolution. The aim of H. S. R. A. was to overthrow British rule and establish a socialist state in India. It vested all decision-making power in a seven-man Central Committee. This Committee was composed of Chandrashekhar Āzād, Commander-in-Chief of the Army; Sukhdev representing Punjāb; Shiv Varmā representing U. P.; Kundan Lāl representing Rājputānā; Fanīndranāth Ghosh representing Bihār; Bhagat Singh and Vijay Kumār Sinhā, liaison among the different provinces. To raise money, they saw no way other than to resort to dacoity, but resolved not to rob individuals—only banks and government treasuries. Furthermore, they would not kill petty police officials or informers, but would select targets who were in the public eye. And in this connection they voted to bomb the Simon Commission.<sup>9</sup>

Ultimately they had to abandon this plan because of lack of funds, but the public organization, the Naujawān Bhārat Sabhā, organized a public demonstration protesting the Simon Commission when it arrived at Lāhore Railway Station on October 30, 1928. Lālā Lājpat Rāi, the "Lion of the Punjāb," joined the young men of the Sabhā in the demonstration :

To protect the elderly "Lion of the Punjāb" Lālā Lājpat Rāi

from the shoving of the crowd, the young men of Naujawān Bhārat Sabhā accompanied him to the station. They held an umbrella over his head to shelter him from the sun. In spite of police threats they refused to clear the way for the Simon Commission . . . the police attacked with their *lāthīs* . . . the crowd behind Lālā Lājpat Rāi was so dense he couldn't move back . . . The young men surrounded Lālāji completely to protect him from injury. In spite of being beaten by the police they did not break ranks. Bhagvatī Charan, Sukhdev and I held fast on our side. Dhanvantrī and Asan Alī were on the other . . . Assistant Superintendent Saunders led the attack himself, armed with a small *lāthī*. He slammed down onto the opened umbrella over Lālāji, breaking it into pieces and injuring Lālāji's shoulder.<sup>10</sup>

That night, in spite of the beating and his injuries, Lājpat Rāi addressed a huge crowd in Lāhore :

Sukhdev and I were standing at the back of the enormous crowd in the meeting at Morī Gate. Deputy Superintendent Neal stood just a few steps away from us. With brilliant eloquence, Lālāji referred scornfully to the incident of the morning, saying, 'A government which brutally attacks unarmed people cannot be considered civilized and cannot survive. I predict that the police of that government who struck me today will one day bring it down into ruins.' And then he expressed the same idea in English saying, 'I declare that the blows struck at me will be the last nails in the coffin of British rule in India.' When Neal heard Lālāji's prophecy, he burst out laughing. His laughter was like a spike driven through my heart. I said to Sukhdev, 'This is unbearable.'<sup>11</sup>

Lājpat Rāi died less than a month later. It could not be said that he died of his injuries, but the doctors felt that the injuries hastened his death. Jawāharlāl Nehrū wrote that :

He (Lālāji) felt angry and bitter, not so much at the personal humiliation, as at the national humiliation involved in the assault on him.<sup>12</sup>

The H. S. R. A. voted to avenge his death by killing the man who struck him—J. P. Saunders, the Assistant Superintendent of Police. The Central Committee chose Rājgurū, Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Āzād and Jai Gopāl. They studied Saunders' habits for days, and as he left



his office on December 17, 1928, riding his motorbike to the gate of the compound, Bhagat Singh and Rājgurū entered the gate and shot him several times, killing him. Āzād covered their escape, shooting and killing constable Chandan Singh who tried to pursue them. After Chandan Singh fell, no one tried to follow them.

So that the people of India would know who had done the deed and why, the next day H. S. R. A. posted a number of leaflets in many different places in Lāhore which said in part :

THE DEATH OF LĀLĀ LĀJPAT RĀI HAS BEEN  
AVENGED BY THE MURDER OF SAUNDERS<sup>13</sup>

The murder of a leader respected by millions of people at the unworthy hands of an ordinary police official like J. P. Saunders was an insult to the nation. It was the bounden duty of young men of India to efface it.

Today the world has seen that the Indian people are ever watchful of the interests of their country and no cost is too great for them to defend its honour . . . We regret to have had to kill a person but he was part and parcel of that inhuman and unjust order which has to be destroyed. In him an agent of British rule has been done away with. Shedding of human blood grieves us, but blood shed at the altar of revolution is unavoidable. Our objective is to work for a revolution which would end exploitation of man by man.<sup>14</sup>

The murder of a British Assistant Superintendent of Police electrified the country, especially when the reason was proclaimed in this way. Yashpāl felt that the people took pride in the incident and Nehrū confirms this impression :

Bhagat Singh did not become popular because of his act of terrorism, but because he seemed to vindicate, for the moment, the honour of Lālā Lājpat Rāi, and through him of the nation. He became a symbol; the act was forgotten, the symbol remained; and within a few months each town and village of the Punjāb, and to a lesser extent in the rest of northern India, resounded with his name. Innumerable songs grew up about him and the popularity that the man achieved was something amazing.<sup>15</sup>

All participants in the murder made good their escape. Bhagat Singh

went to Calcuttā, attended the annual Congress meeting, and there met and enlisted the cooperation of Jatindranāth Dās who knew bomb manufacture and agreed to teach it to the provincial representatives of H. S. R. A. With this knowledge, Sukhdev set up a bomb factory in Lāhore, and Shiv Varmā in Sahāranpur.

Early in 1929, the Government, concerned about growing trade unionism as well as the possible appeal of Communism, tried to pass two bills through the Central Assembly : The Trade Disputes Bill, intended to restrict the workers' right to strike, and the Public Safety Bill, intended to discourage the growth of Communism by cutting it off from external help of any kind. Both bills were defeated. Nonetheless, the Government stated its intention to enact them into law by the Viceroy's special powers of certification.

All nationalists opposed the bills and H. S. R. A. decided to make the event of the Viceroy's certification an occasion for their protest by exploding two bombs in the Assembly Chamber immediately after the announcement that the Trade Disputes Bill was certified into law. Bhagat Singh and B. K. Dutt were chosen to explode the bombs in the Assembly Chamber, drop leaflets explaining their action, and then offer themselves for arrest. According to Yashpāl, the bomb explosions had a twofold purpose. First, they indicated to the British that coercion is double-edged. If the country is ruled by force, it will respond with force. Second, H. S. R. A. wished to emphasize to those who believed that freedom could be won by constitutional means the futility of their beliefs in view of the way the Government flouted the constitutional process.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, they planned by this dramatic gesture to publicize their beliefs and to arouse the sympathy of the people to their cause by sacrificing themselves.

Yashpāl's version of the event is that on April 8, 1929, Bhagat Singh and B. K. Dutt took their seats in the Visitors Gallery. When Sir George Schuster stated that the Trade Disputes Bill had become law by certification, Bhagat Singh tossed a bomb at the wall behind Schuster; Dutt did the same. They threw the leaflets they had brought in all directions. Both men shouted, "Long live revolution! Down with imperialism! Workers of the world, unite!"—then stood quietly in the smoke and noise and pandemonium of the Assembly Chamber waiting to be arrested.<sup>17</sup> Yashpāl asserts, and the newspaper account corroborates, that if they had wished, they could have escaped, but made no attempt to do so.<sup>18</sup>

The leaflet which explained their act read :

'It takes a loud noise to make the deaf hear.' With these immortal remarks uttered on a similar occasion by Vaillant, the French anarchist martyr, do we strongly justify this act of ours.

Without repeating the humiliating history of the past ten years of the working of the Reforms, and without mentioning the insults hurled down upon the head of the Indian nation through this house, so-called the Indian Parliament, we want to point out that while people are expecting some more crumbs of Reform from the Simon Commission, and are even quarrelling over the distribution of the expected bones, Government are thrusting upon us new repressive measures like those of the Public Safety and Trade Disputes Bills, while reserving the Press Sedition Bill for the next session.

The indiscriminate arrests of Labour leaders working in the open field clearly indicates as to which way the wind blows.

In these extremely provocative circumstances, the Hindustān Socialist Republican Association, in all seriousness and realizing its full responsibility, has decided and ordered its army to do this particular action so that a stop may be put to this humiliating farce and to let alien bureaucratic exploiters do what they wish but to make them come before the public eye in their naked form.

We are sorry to admit that we who attach so great a sanctity to human life, we who dream of a glorious future when man will be enjoying perfect peace and full liberty, have been forced to shed human blood. But the sacrifice of individuals at the altar of the Great Revolution that will bring freedom to all, rendering the exploitation of man by man impossible, is inevitable.

Long live the Revolution! . . .<sup>19</sup>

Bhagat Singh and B. K. Dutt were charged under Section 307 of the I. P. C. (attempt to murder) and the Explosive Substances Act. They read a statement before the court on June 6, 1929, summing up the reasons for their actions and the ideals of their organization.

The reason for their act, they said, was to have a chance to present their views before the public. They pointed out the helplessness and sham of the Indian Parliament which had voted down the two bills but could not prevent their becoming law. Concerning the Trade Disputes

Bill, the statement says :

Finally, the insult of what we considered an inhuman and barbarous measure was hurled on the devoted heads of the representatives of the entire country, and the starving and struggling millions were deprived of their primary right and sole means of improving their economic welfare. None who has felt like us for the dumb driven drudges of labourers could possibly witness this spectacle with equanimity. None whose heart bleeds for those who have given their life blood in silence to the building up of the economic structure of the exploiter, of whom the Government happens to be the biggest in this country, could repress the cry of the soul in agonizing anguish which so ruthless a blow wrung out of our hearts. . . We dropped the bombs on the floor of the Assembly Chamber to register our protest on behalf of those who had no other means left to give expression to their heart-rending agony. Our sole purpose was 'to make the deaf hear' and give the heedless a timely warning.

Others have as keenly felt as we have done and from under the seeming serenity of the sea of Indian humanity a veritable storm is about to break out. We have only hoisted the danger signal to warn those who are speeding along without heeding the grave dangers. We have only marked the end of the era of utopian non-violence of whose futility the rising generation has been convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt . . . We have used the expression 'utopian nonviolence' which requires some explanation. Force, when aggressively applied, is 'violence' and is therefore morally unjustifiable. But when it is used in furtherance of a legitimate cause, it has its moral justification. Elimination of force at all costs is utopian and the new movement which has arisen in the country and of which we have given a warning is inspired by the ideals which guided Gurū Gobind Singh and Shivājī, Kemāl Pāshā and Rizā Khān, Washington and Garibaldi, Lafayette and Lenin.

They then pointed out that they did not plan to harm anyone and, although they could easily have killed many persons, aimed their bombs carefully to land in safe places and deliberately offered themselves for arrest so that they might have this opportunity to be heard by the people. Their statement went on to say :

Bhagat Singh was asked in the lower court as to what he meant

by the word 'revolution.' In answer to that question we would say that 'revolution' does not necessarily involve sanguinary strife, nor is there any place in it for individual vendetta. It is not the cult of the bomb and pistol. By revolution we mean that the present order of things which is based on manifest injustice must change. Producers or labourers, in spite of being the most necessary element of society, are robbed by their exploiters of the fruits of their labour and deprived of their elementary right. On the other hand, the peasant who grows corn for all starves with his family. The weaver who supplies the world market with textile fabrics cannot find enough to cover his own and his children's bodies. Masons, smiths and carpenters who rear magnificent palaces, live and perish in slums, and, on the other hand, capitalist exploiters, parasites of society, squander millions on their whims. The terrible inequalities and forced disparity are heading us towards chaos. This state of affairs cannot last and it is obvious that the present order of society is merry-making on the brink of a volcano and innocent children of exploiters no less than millions of exploited are walking on the edge of a dangerous precipice. The whole edifice of this civilization, if not saved in time, shall crumble.

Radical change, therefore, is necessary, and it is the duty of those who realize this to reorganize society on a socialistic basis. Unless this is done and exploitation of men and of nations by nations, which goes masquerading as imperialism, is brought to an end, the suffering and carnage with which humanity is threatened today cannot be prevented and all talk of ending wars and ushering in an era of universal peace is undisguised hypocrisy.

By revolution we mean the ultimate establishment of an order of society which may not be threatened by such breakdown and in which the sovereignty of the proletariat should be recognized and as a result of which a world federation should redeem humanity from the bondage of capitalism and the misery of imperial wars . . . Revolution is the inalienable right of mankind. Freedom is the imprescriptible birthright of all. The labourer is the real sustainer of society. The sovereignty of the people is the ultimate destiny of workers. For these ideals and for this faith we shall welcome any suffering to which we may be condemned. To the altar of revolution we have brought our youth as incense, for no sacrifice is too great for so magnificent a cause. We are content.

We await the advent of revolution. Long live revolution.<sup>20</sup>

On June 12, 1929, Bhagat Singh and B. K. Dutt were sentenced to life imprisonment.<sup>21</sup>

On April 15, 1929, the police raided H.S.R.A.'s bomb factory in Lāhore and arrested Kishorilāl, Sukhdev and Jai Gopāl. Jai Gopāl became an informer, and that is how the connections among the Saunders' murder, the Assembly bomb incident and the Lāhore bomb factory became known.

As a result of raids in Lāhore and Sahāranpur, and aided by informers, the Government instituted the Lāhore Conspiracy and Saunders Murder Case on July 10, 1929. The defendants were charged under Sections 121, 121A, 122 and 123 of the Indian Penal Code that they had been engaged in a conspiracy to wage war against His Majesty the King Emperor and to deprive him of the sovereignty of British India, and to overawe by criminal force the Government established by law in British India and collect men, arms and munitions for this purpose. Other charges against the accused included murder, abetment of murder and conspiracy to murder, conspiracy to revolution and other offences against the State and offences under the Explosive Substances Act. 32 persons were accused. Of this number, 7 turned approver (informer), 9 absconded, and the remaining 16 were tried.<sup>22</sup>

Yashpāl narrowly escaped arrest at the Lāhore bomb factory. He fled to Kāngrā, but within a month returned to Lāhore with the intention of gathering together those who had not been caught. All the members of H. S. R. A. who knew bomb manufacture were in prison. Yashpāl joined Bhagvatī Charan in Calcuttā. Bhagvatī, who had private means, financed Yashpāl to a trip to Kashmīr to learn from a friend of his how to manufacture bombs. Their plan was first to learn how, then to set up a bomb factory; and then to assassinate the Viceroy by bombing his special train as he travelled through India. Between the conception and the execution of the plan, six months passed. In the meantime, Chandrashekhar Āzād joined them and with others they had an organization again. The plan was to explode the Viceroy's train six miles from the station as it approached Delhī in the early morning of December 23, 1929. For this purpose, they had buried a bomb under the railway track which had to be detonated with an electric battery just as the train reached a certain point on the track. This was Yashpāl's task. As he described the event :

The Viceroy's train was due in less than fifteen minutes now.

Some of the blackness of the night had lightened, but the atmosphere was all white fog like puffs of cotton. Bushes ten feet away were not visible. I thought, if I can't see the beam on the face of the train, how will I know when it has reached the right spot? I realized I would have to make a judgement on the basis of sound alone.

We had planned that the bomb would explode on the face of the engine just as the train reached a certain place. The engine would be derailed and roll over and over, just as in a head-on collision of two trains.

...I heard sound on the line from the direction of Mathurā going towards New Delhī. My eyes strained to pierce through the fog for the engine light, but I could not see it. Now I had to judge when to push the switch on the battery on the basis of sound alone.

The train was very close now. I held my breath, gathering all consciousness into my ears, waiting, my hand on the switch to locate the train by sound. Now! I pushed the switch. An instantaneous, awful burst of explosion!

I waited to hear the next sound—the crash of the train falling down the steep bank and rolling over and over. But, contrary to all my hopes and expectations, the train sped on to New Delhī in its customary way.

I was stunned with disappointment and defeat. I suspect that people's hearts stop beating from shocks like that. I, failed, crushed, helpless and astonished, only stood there.<sup>23</sup>

It was not completely a failure. Yashpāl got away safely and met Bhagvatī at Ghāziābād Station as they had planned. They boarded the train to Calcuttā, and even before they arrived there, newsboys were selling an extra edition of the newspapers which said that the dining room of the train had been blown to bits and almost six feet of railway line had been torn up. However, because the train was travelling quickly at the time of the explosion, its momentum carried it across the broken track. The Viceroy's secretary was knocked unconscious. A bearer who was looking out of the window was burned. The Viceroy fell out of bed.

When Yashpāl and Bhagvatī arrived in Calcuttā, the newspapers there reported that the delegates to the annual Congress meeting in Lāhore

went wild with joy when they learned the news of the explosion. They may have been delighted, but Mahātmā Gāndhī clearly was not. He presented a resolution before the Congress denouncing the bombing and he urged the Congress to pass it unanimously. The resolution he presented on December 31, 1929, to the Lāhore Congress said :

This Congress deplores the bomb outrage perpetrated on the Viceroy's train, and reiterates its own conviction that such action is not only contrary to the creed of Congress, but results in harm being done to the national cause. It congratulates the Viceroy and Lady Irwin and their party, including the poor servants, on their fortunate and narrow escape.<sup>24</sup>

In spite of Gāndhijī's plea, the resolution was passed by a narrow majority—only 81 out of 1731 votes. Many spoke against it. The *Indian Quarterly Register* reported :

Swāmī Govindānanda opposing the resolution said that the creed of nonviolence should not be forced on those who were not Congressmen and believed in different means to achieve the freedom of the country.

The Congress should therefore not condemn those who did not believe in the Congress creed. It was very difficult to say which party was serving the country better. The time for pronouncing judgement would be when India was free. He further deplored that while the resolution condemned the outrage, it did not say a word against the Government for having arrested several innocent young men at Lāhore who had nothing to do with the outrage.

Mr Abdur Rahamān, supporting the resolution, said that he honoured everyone who worked for the cause of the country, yet, as the perpetrator of the outrage in question had gone against the Congress creed, it was the duty of the Congress to maintain its dignity by passing this resolution. He therefore supported the resolution. (Cries of 'Sit down.' 'Go back.')

Concluding, the speaker said that if any one of those who made such cries and considered himself capable of leading the country in place of Gāndhijī would come forward to lead them, then the speaker would oppose the resolution.<sup>25</sup>

Yashpāl asserts that the majority of Congress delegates who voted for the resolution did so under duress. Gāndhijī, it is safe to say, was



dissatisfied with the voting results and the reactions of the Congressmen. In the next issue of *Young India* (January 2, 1930), he wrote an article, "The Cult of the Bomb" in which he stated that the revolutionaries harmed the national cause, and he reiterated his faith in nonviolence as the only means by which India could win freedom. He ended the article with the following :

Let those who are not past reason then cease either secretly or openly to endorse activities such as this latest bomb outrage. Rather let them openly and heartily condemn these outrages, so that our deluded patriots may, for want of nourishment to their violent spirit, realize the futility of violence and the great harm that violent activity has every time done.<sup>26</sup>

Yashpāl and Bhagvatī agreed that this article could not remain unanswered. Together they wrote a response entitled "The Philosophy of the Bomb," which H. S. R. A. distributed secretly on the morning of January 26, 1930, in a number of different cities in India simultaneously. No one was caught, and this fact, Yashpāl felt, made a great impression on the people. The Government, too, was concerned because the attitude of the people seemed to be one of increasing sympathy towards the revolutionaries. In fact, it was observed that the trial of the Lāhore Conspiracy Case aroused public sympathy for the revolutionaries and that as a result a very strong impetus was given to the terrorist movement.<sup>27</sup>

In "The Philosophy of the Bomb," Yashpāl and Bhagvatī took issue with Gāndhījī on his use of the word "violence" as it applied to them. They wrote :

Violence is physical force applied for committing injustice, and that is certainly not what the revolutionaries stand for. On the other hand, what generally goes by the name of nonviolence is in reality the theory of soul-force as applied to the attainment of personal and national rights through courting suffering and hoping thus to convert your opponent to your point of view. When a revolutionary believes certain things to be his right, he asks for them, pleads for them, argues for them, wills to attain them with all the soul-force at his command, stands the greatest amount of suffering for them, is always prepared to make the highest sacrifice for their attainment and also backs his efforts with all the physical force he is capable of. You may coin what other word to describe

his methods but you cannot call it violence because that would constitute an outrage on the dictionary meaning of that word. Satyāgrah is insistence upon Truth. Why press for the acceptance of the Truth by soul-force alone? Why not add physical force also to it? While the revolutionaries stand for winning independence by all forces, physical as well as moral, at their command, the advocates of soul-force would like to ban the use of physical force. . .<sup>28</sup>

The article went on to say that the revolutionaries believed that the deliverance of their country will come through revolution, which would not only get rid of the British but also end capitalism and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat—and also that terrorism was a necessary first step to revolution. To Gāndhījī's assertion in "Cult of the Bomb" that violence impedes progress and postpones the day of freedom, Yashpāl and Bhagvatī in their article countered that Russia and Turkey are examples which refute his claim. They then pointed up the failure of Gāndhījī's nonviolent programme to date, saying :

It is claimed that nonviolence can be used as a weapon for righting political wrongs. To say the least it is a novel idea as yet untried. It failed to achieve what were considered the just rights of Indians in South Africa. It failed to bring 'swarāj within a year' to the Indian masses in spite of the untiring labours of an army of national workers and a quarter crore of rupees. More recently it failed to win the Bārdolī peasants what the leaders of the Satyāgrah movement had promised them . . . We know of no other trials nonviolence has had on a countrywide scale. Up to this time nonviolence has been blessed with one result—failure.

. . .Gāndhī has called upon all those who are not past reason to withdraw their support of the revolutionaries and condemn their actions . . . How easy and convenient it is to call people deluded, to declare them to be past reason, to call upon the public to withdraw its support and condemn them so that they may get isolated and be forced to suspend their activities, especially when a man holds the confidence of an influential section of the public! It is a pity that Gāndhījī does not and will not understand revolutionary psychology in spite of his lifelong experience of public life. Life is a precious thing. It is dear to everyone. If a man becomes a revolutionary, if he goes about with his life in the hollow of his hand

ready to sacrifice it at any moment, he does not do so merely for the fun of it. He does not risk his life merely because sometimes when the crowd is in a sympathetic mood, it cries 'bravo' in appreciation. He does it because his reason forces him to take that course; his conscience dictates it. A revolutionary believes in reason more than anything. It is to reason and to reason alone that he bows. No amount of abuse and condemnation, even if it emanates from the highest of the high, can turn him from his set purpose. . . We take this opportunity to appeal to our countrymen—to the youth, to the workers and peasants, to the revolutionary intelligentsia—to come forward and join us in carrying aloft the banner of freedom. Let us establish a new order of society in which political and economic exploitation will be an impossibility. . . There is no crime that Britain has not committed in India. Deliberate misrule has reduced us to paupers, has bled us white. As a race and as a people we stand dishonoured and outraged. . . We ask not for mercy and we give no quarter. Ours is a war to the end—to victory or death. Long live revolution!<sup>29</sup>

The debate of the Congress delegates on the resolution condemning the bombing and "The Philosophy of the Bomb" pointed up the dilemma of those who opposed Gāndhījī. His great prestige and power persuaded even those Congressmen who did not agree with his ideas to vote with him. The revolutionaries were concerned that because of Gāndhījī's denunciation they would become isolated and abandoned by those who had in the past helped them.

A few days before "The Philosophy of the Bomb" was circulated throughout North India, Āzād called a meeting of the Party in Kānpur to reorganize the Central Committee and apportion tasks. The new Committee was appointed by him and consisted of Bhagvatī Charan, Seth Dāmodar Swarūp, Vīrbhadra Tiwārī, Kailāshpati and Yashpāl—in addition to Āzād. Yashpāl was made provincial organizer for Punjāb, Vīrbhadra for U. P. and Kailāshpati for Delhī. In addition, the major results of the meeting were the plan to build a public organization which would have the function of education on the theory and practice of revolution and recruitment of young men for H. S. R. A.; the decision that unless the public became more generous in its contributions, they would still have to resort to dacoity; and, finally, to organize the escape of Bhagat Singh and Dutt from jail. At first

Yashpāl spoke against the rescue attempt because he felt H. S. R. A. would be risking its men on a side issue. He was outvoted, however, and helped to plan and participated in the attempted rescue.

The plan was to attack when Bhagat Singh and Dutt were being transported from Borstal Jail to Lāhore Central Jail where the Lāhore Conspiracy Case was being tried. The police customarily drove a van to the jail gate. When the gate was opened, the prisoners walked about twenty steps to the doors in the back of the van. That was the time to attack. Each man had his task : one would bomb the gate; one would shoot at the six soldiers who guarded the prisoners; one would run to Bhagat Singh and Dutt and hand them revolvers, etc. Bhagat Singh knew the plan—it had been smuggled to him in prison. He was to signal by scratching his forehead as he walked to the van.

On June 1, Yashpāl, Āzād, Bacchan and Madan Gopāl waited in an auto for the signal that the police van was approaching the gate of Borstal Jail. On receiving it, they drove quickly to the intersection leading to Borstal Jail gate :

The police van was approaching the gate at a very leisurely pace. A bit later it stopped and waited at the gate as it always did, but—I don't know why—perhaps because the gate was not opened immediately, the van turned around. The door by which the prisoners entered was in the back of the van. The significance of its turning around was that now Bhagat Singh and Dutt walked directly into the van from the gate. The van door was so close to the gate it was like the transfer of birds from one cage to another when you place the open doors of the two cages together. So Bhagat Singh and Dutt didn't have a chance to walk the twenty steps and break away.<sup>30</sup>

This plan had to be abandoned, but they were prepared to attack the van as it passed them on the main road. However, Bhagat Singh, as he passed gave no signal and no sign of recognition, and Āzād called off the attack. On the very next day, one of the bombs they had planned to use in the attack exploded in the house they were staying in on Bahāwalpore Road in Lāhore. They vacated the house immediately, but the bomb explosion gave the police many clues to the identities of the persons involved which led to arrests later.

Āzād next decided that it was necessary to prepare more bombs. He financed the new venture with a dacoity in Chāndnī Chowk<sup>31</sup> in Delhī

and got away with enough money to set up a bomb factory in Delhī. Yashpāl was put in charge of producing bombs, and his duties in the Punjāb were temporarily taken over by Dhanvantrī and Sukhdevrāj. In the month or more Yashpāl worked in the bomb factory in Delhī, he prepared the ingredients for about 600 bombs. He did not work alone. One of his helpers was S. H. Vātsyāyan ("Agyeya"), the famous contemporary Hindī writer, who at that time had quit school to join H. S. R. A. Āzād rented a large house for the factory, and to give it an identity which explained the smoke and smells attendant upon bomb manufacture, hung a large sign in front of the house : HIMĀLAYAN TOILETS. The sign was intended to indicate that the factory manufactured cosmetic preparations.

Shortly afterwards, Yashpāl was summoned to Kānpur to attend a meeting of the Central Committee. By chance, he discovered that the reason he had been summoned was that the Central Committee (which had met earlier without him although he was a member) planned to have him killed.

That this decision was made in the way that it was made points up one of the serious weaknesses of H. S. R. A. Personal rivalry existed between Yashpāl and Sukhdevrāj and Dhanvantrī who had replaced him in the Punjāb organizational work. They made accusations against him (which he was not told and could not reply to). The Committee which met and made the decision against Yashpāl was not the one which had been appointed by Āzād earlier in the year. And it is an interesting observation on the social conservatism of these revolutionaries that one of the complaints against Yashpāl was that he was living with Prakāshvatī (whom he later married)—and by living with her gave the Party a bad name.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, the one-man rule which H. S. R. A. had tried to avoid by organizing a Central Committee which in theory made all decisions, was nevertheless still operative. Āzād made all decisions—it was simply a question of who influenced him at the time. Therefore, when Yashpāl found out about the sentence on him, he saw Āzād, convinced him of the baselessness of the charges against him, and Āzād in turn made an attempt to compose the differences between Yashpāl and Sukhdev and Dhanvantrī. The outcome was that Yashpāl agreed to relinquish his job as Punjāb organizer in favour of Dhanvantrī. However, personal feelings ran so deep that Āzād saw no way out of the dilemma but to disband the Central Committee entirely, divide the arms among the provincial organizers—and effectively disband

H. S. R. A. as an interprovincial organization.

Yashpāl joined Āzād. H. S. R. A. as an interprovincial organization was no more. Yashpāl planned then to go to Russia for some experience in political work. At that time, there appeared to be serious negotiations between the Congress and the British and it seemed to many that India would be free soon. Āzād went to speak to Jawāharlāl Nehrū in February, 1931, about the fate of the revolutionaries. That meeting is mentioned in Nehrū's autobiography :

A stranger came to see me at our house, and I was told he was Chandrashekhar Āzād. I had never seen him before but I had heard of him ten years earlier when he had non-cooperated from school and gone to prison during the NCO movement in 1921. A boy of fifteen or so then, he had been flogged in prison for some breach of gaol discipline. Later he had drifted towards the terrorists and he became one of their prominent men in North India. . . He had been induced to visit me because of the general expectation. . . that some negotiations between the Government and the Congress were likely. He wanted to know if, in case of a settlement, his group of people would have any peace. Would they still be considered and treated as outlaws, hunted out from place to place with a price on their heads and the prospect of the gallows ever before them? Or was there a possibility of their being allowed to pursue peaceful vocations? . . . I had no answer to his question : What was he to do now? Nothing was likely to happen that would bring him or his like any relief or peace. All I could suggest was that he should use his influence to prevent the occurrence of terrorist acts in the future, for these could only injure the larger cause as well as his own group.<sup>33</sup>

In the course of this conversation Nehrū remarked that he considered Āzād's organization "fascistic." Āzād asked Yashpāl to speak to Nehrū about this since he felt Nehrū had misunderstood him. Yashpāl observed :

I cannot understand how Panditjī whiffed the odour of fascism in what Āzād said. Fascism is based on repression by rulers. We never even dreamed of ruling, but we were opposing the fascism or repression of British rule . . . Āzād could not speak English. Therefore perhaps Nehrūjī could not really understand him.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to clarifying this, Yashpāl wanted to seek Nehrū's advice

and help concerning a visit to Russia. During this time when he was a fugitive, both in the Lāhore Conspiracy Case and as a result of the bombing of the Viceroy's train, his freedom precarious, his future uncertain, he wanted to visit Russia to learn more about socialism and to see for himself the results of the Russian revolution. A meeting was arranged at Nehrū's home in Allāhābād. Yashpāl reported on this visit :

Pandit Nehrū said that terrorism was absolutely futile. I told him : We are not terrorists. We are trying to spark a broadly-based armed revolution. We, too, are part of the struggle for national liberation. By challenging the Government's repression, we want to show them that we do not fear their armed might. Our aim is socialism, not terrorism.<sup>35</sup>

Concerning his visit to Russia, Nehrū promised to try to help him financially. A few days later, through a mutual friend, he sent Yashpāl 1,500 rupees. Yashpāl started making plans to leave for Russia via Afghānistān immediately. His plans were changed, however, when Āzād was killed by police in Alfred Park in Allāhābād on February 27. Yashpāl felt that his first responsibility was to reorganize the Party, but his attempts failed and again he decided to go to Russia. He realized it would be very hazardous to enter the country illegally without credentials, since he might be considered a spy. Therefore, he first went to Bombay to ask B. T. Ranādive for a letter from the Communist Party of India which would identify him as a revolutionary and a trustworthy person. Ranādive said that the Communist Party would not give him such a document for, if he were arrested, the letter would prove that there was contact between the Communist Party and the terrorists. However, he offered to introduce Yashpāl to people who would help him go to Russia via the sea route.<sup>36</sup>

Instead, Yashpāl tried again to reorganize the revolutionaries. By mid-1931, H. S. R. A. had been decimated by arrests, prison sentences, executions and accidental deaths. In May, 1930, Bhagvatī Charan was killed testing a bomb. In August, the police arrested a large number of revolutionaries who belonged to a splinter group of H. S. R. A. in the Punjāb, which called itself the Ātshī-Chakkar (Wheel of Fire). Through testimony in this trial, all the earlier activities of H. S. R. A. were discovered including the bombing of the Viceroy's train. In October, Kailāshpati was arrested and became an informer. As a result, the

Delhī bomb factory was raided in early November. Dhanvantrī and Hansrāj "Wireless" were arrested in November. In February, 1931, Āzād was killed by police; in March, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rājgurū were hanged—the decision of the Lāhore Conspiracy trial. In addition, 7 others of the defendants received life terms. In May, Jagdish was killed by police and Sukhdevrāj was arrested.

Yashpāl wanted to reorganize the remaining revolutionaries and change the method of operation. He was unalterably opposed to dacoity for it alienated the people and risked the lives of the men. He saw the future of H. S. R. A. in terms of educating the people to guerrilla warfare against the Government. He hoped to acquire a printing press and use it for propaganda, for he felt that if H. S. R. A. could not inspire the people themselves to act, the movement had no future.

In early January, 1932, at a meeting of revolutionaries from all over India, Yashpāl was elected Commander-in-Chief. Based on the agreements reached at this meeting, Yashpāl wrote a new declaration of principles. In essence it said :

The strength of H. S. R. A. is not in the hands of scattered bands of armed young men, but in the hearts of our hundreds of millions of countrymen who seethe under the shame and outrage of the British rule. . . That is the power they will fight with to free the country. All the toiling peasants and labourers who cannot enjoy the fruits of their labour because of their economic and political subjection, human beings deprived of the life of a human being to which they are entitled, are in the Army of the war for the freedom of this country.

It is with these persons and groups that H. S. R. A. expects to cooperate in the fight for freedom. The police station and the military cantonment in your area are the symbols and fetters of your slavery and subjection.

It is your responsibility to destroy them to make British rule impossible. You don't have to wait for bombs and rifles to strike at the foreign Government. All the armaments in their possession are yours. Anything that comes to your hands are your weapons. The path of revolution was pointed out at Sholāpur and Chaurī Chaurā. You don't have to wait for anyone's orders. Every injury inflicted on the British Government is a blow for the freedom of the country. There is no power on earth that can suppress the



wishes of the 250 million people of this country.

This is a warning to those who serve the British Government and keep our people in slavery; they are traitors to their country. The heroic Garhwālīs<sup>37</sup> of Peshāwar have shown the path of duty. To help and serve a government which is the enemy of the country is treason. Every patriot has the right to punish those traitors who serve such a government to make their livelihood.

We aim to end indigenous and foreign exploitation and to give all the working people the right to self-determination so that all men and women may have a full and equal opportunity to earn their livelihood, enjoy their full development and all the fruits of their labour.

(Signed)

Yashpāl<sup>38</sup>

In the past all proclamations of this kind were in English, but Yashpāl decided that from now on they would be in Hindī and Urdū.

As head of H. S. R. A. he tried to unify and enlarge the organization, and in this connection he agreed to meet with a group in Allāhābād on January 22, 1932. The morning after he arrived in Allāhābād he was arrested. He was brought to trial and sentenced to 14 years in prison for attempt to murder and carrying a weapon without a licence. This was tantamount to a life sentence since at the end of 14 years the prisoner was not released automatically, but had to seek the Government's permission to be freed. He could be kept in jail for life if the Government so chose. He was released, however, in March, 1938, as a result of the Congress' election to power.

H. S. R. A. was destroyed in the early 1930's. Nonetheless, this small band of revolutionaries, whose organizational life spanned only a few years, made impressive accomplishments. They heightened national and anti-colonial consciousness in the masses of the people.<sup>39</sup> They compelled the Government to make political concessions for fear of anarchy and armed revolt.<sup>40</sup> They propounded socialist principles which are now echoed in the goals of free India.

The Government's efficient police force and harsh judiciary were most effective in executing the leaders or sentencing them to long prison terms. Equally important was the influence of Mahātmā Gāndhī, whose opposition to the revolutionaries was consistent and unremitting. Some members of the Congress, as individuals, helped the revolutionaries,

but Gāndhījī's influence and prestige turned away much potential support and served to isolate them.

These external pressures combined to effect instability in the organization of H. S. R. A. The shifting of leadership because of death or imprisonment, factionalism among members, concern about police informers, lack of funds for self-protection, all contributed further to the dissolution of the organization. This combination of external stress and internal strain made it all the more remarkable that the revolutionaries had as much impact as they did on the Indian political system.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Two other interesting accounts of revolutionary movements in India are Manmathnāth Gupt, *They Lived Dangerously*, Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1969, and Gulāb Singh, *Under the Shadow of Gallows*, Delhi: Roop Chand, 1963.
2. *Sinhāvalokan*, I, 14.
3. *Ibid.*, I, p. 19.
4. *Ibid.*, I, p. 41.
5. *Ibid.*, I, p. 62.
6. *Ibid.*, I, p. 81.
7. *Ibid.*, I, p. 89.
8. The Kākorī dacoity was committed by the Hindustān Republican Association which was led by Rām Prasād Bismil. H. R. A. tried to solve its financial difficulties by robbing government treasuries rather than individuals. On August 9, 1925, a group of about ten young men stopped a railway train going from Kākorī to Ālamnagar, broke open a safe and got away with a large sum of money. 29 persons were tried; 4 sentenced to death; 4 to life imprisonment; 4 (including two approvers) were acquitted. The rest received sentences ranging from 5 to 14 years. Rām Prasād Bismil was one of those hanged. His last words were, "I wish the downfall of the British Empire." (Taken from R. C. Majumdār, *History of the Freedom Movement*, vol. 3, pp. 494-95.
9. The Simon Commission was appointed by the British Parliament to study the working of the Indian Government under the Government of India Act of 1919. The British appointed no Indian member and Indian political groups were unanimous in their resentment.
10. *Sinhāvalokan*, I, pp. 137-8.
11. *Ibid.*, I, p. 140.
12. Jawāharlāl Nehrū, *An Autobiography*, p. 174.
13. *Sinhāvalokan*, I, p. 147.

14. Gopāl Thākur, *Bhagat Singh : The Man and His Ideas*, pp. 9-10.
15. Jawāharlāl Nehrū, *op. cit.*, p. 176.
16. *Sinhāvalokan*, I, p. 161.
17. *Ibid.*, I, p. 169.
18. *Ibid.*, I, p. 171. Also *The Pioneer Mail and Indian Weekly News*, April 12, 1929.
19. *The Pioneer Mail and Indian Weekly News*, April 12, 1929.
20. Their entire statement before the court appears in the *Indian Quarterly Register*, 1929, vol. 1, pp. 78-80.
21. Although no one was killed in the Assembly bomb explosions it should be pointed out that several persons were injured.
22. The 16 who were tried were : Sukhdev; Kishorilāl; Shiv Varmā; Gayā Prasād; Jaidev Kapūr; Jatīndranāth Dās; Bhagat Singh; Kamalnāth Trivedī; B. K. Dutt; Mahāvīr Singh; Jatīndranāth Sānyāl; Āgyārām; Devrāj; Premdutt; Surendranāth Pāndey; Ajoy Kumār Ghosh. The approvers were : Jai Gopāl; Hansrāj Vorāh; Rāmsharan Dās; Lalit Mukherjī; Brahmdudd; Fanīndra Ghosh; Manmohan Mukherjī. Bhagvatī Charan, Yashpāl and Chandrashekhar Āzād were among the absconders. (From *The Indian Quarterly Register*, vol. 2, 1929, pp. 25-27).
23. *Sinhāvalokan*, II, pp. 133-4.
24. *Indian Quarterly Register*, 1929, vol. II, p. 298.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 299. Others spoke on the resolution as well.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
27. *India in 1929-30*, p. 12.
28. A copy of "The Philosophy of the Bomb" was supplied to me by Yashpāl. It appeared in English originally—therefore this is verbatim and not a translation from Hindī.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Sinhāvalokan*, II, pp. 205-6.
31. *Ibid.*, II, p. 216. See also *India in 1930-31*, pp. 557-8.
32. *Ibid.*, II, p. 256.
33. Nehrū, *op. cit.*, pp. 261-62.
34. *Sinhāvalokan*, III, p. 69.
35. *Ibid.*, III, p. 70.
36. *Ibid.*, III, pp. 98-99.
37. The Garhwālī incident to which he refers here is one where two platoons of the 2nd Battalion of the 18th Royal Garhwālī Rifles were sent to Peshāwar to put down local demonstrations. The troops refused to fire on the unarmed people, and as a result 17 men of the Garhwālī Rifles were courtmartialled and sentenced to long prison terms. Gāndhījī disapproved of the soldiers for having disobeyed orders. He told a French journalist, Charles Petrasch, who reported the interview in *Le Monde*, February 20, 1932, that : "A soldier who disobeys an order to fire breaks the oath which he has taken and renders himself guilty of criminal disobedience. I cannot ask officials and soldiers to disobey, for when I am in power, I shall in all likelihood make use of those same officials and those same soldiers. If I taught them to disobey I should be afraid that they might do the same when I am in power." (From Rajanī Palme Dutt, *India Today*, reprinted in *Gāndhī, Maker of Modern India ?*, p. 39).

38. *Sinhāvalokan*, III, pp. 107-8.
39. Bipin Chandra, "Revolutionary Terrorists in Northern India in the 1920's." B. R. Nandā, editor, *Socialism in India*, Delhi : Vikās Publications, 1972, p. 185.
40. R. C. Majumdār, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. xix.

COMMUNALISM, FACTIONALISM AND NATIONAL  
INTEGRATION IN THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE  
PUNJĀB CONGRESS PARTY

PAUL WALLACE

The thesis of this article is that particularistic communal structures and, equally important, attitudes towards communal issues combined with secular issues to produce a clearly articulated factional system within the Punjāb Congress Party by the 1920's. It is critical to an understanding of the development of Congress factionalism that it related to particular social bases, developed within a framework of specific historical events, and continued at an accelerated pace processes that began earlier among certain sections of the Hindū, Muslim and Sikh communities. Patterns and processes which became institutionalized by the 1920's, it can be argued, continued, in a somewhat altered form, into the post-independence period.

Religious reform movements involving the three major communities of Punjāb occasioned a revitalization and activation of large numbers of people in the province. Most notable were the Anjuman-i-Islām societies and the Ahmadīyāh movement among the Muslims, the Ārya Samāj among the Hindūs, and the Singh Sabhā and the Gurdwārā reform movements among the Sikhs. Although each of the groups was based upon a particular religious community, they were all concerned with reform and development and were not satisfied with the *status quo*. More to the point, they became engaged in activities designed to change the existing situation according to their individual group readings of the situation. The process involved a heightened sense of self-identity and confidence, growing concern with the modern world, especially in such areas as education, increasing demands by the respective communities as articulated by the particularistic groups, and interaction and sometimes conflict with the Government.

The awakening of the three major communities, if only among the elites, marked a beginning of political mobilization which led to radical changes in a heretofore politically passive Punjāb. Communal self-identification became institutionalized in a dynamic form beginning in

the latter part of the nineteenth century, before the nationalist movement as represented by the Congress Party became a meaningful entity.

Timing in this case is of fundamental importance. Communal groups served as initial change agents for both social mobilization and politicization rather than the nationalist movement. They, rather than the Congress Party, produced the bulk of the leadership and the cadre, as well as an orientation towards communal issues which comprised the core elements for nationalist politics during the first two decades of the twentieth century.

Prior to 1905, Punjāb was so politically dormant that it could be described "as quiet and somnolescent as any Bureaucracy would wish."<sup>1</sup> The Bengāl Partition of 1905 created some stir in the Punjāb, and the Land Colonization Act of 1907 in which water rates were to be increased served as a catalyst for major protests.<sup>2</sup> Almost no feedback into an institutionalized nationalist movement occurred, and the Congress Party continued to be basically a paper organization until the momentous events of 1919-1920. Dr Gopichand Bhārgava, one of the key Congress leaders in the pre-independence period, frankly asserted that before 1920 "no regular Congress Party . . . existed."<sup>3</sup> The Indian Association and other bodies sent representatives whenever Congress session was held and individuals paid a small fee to become members of the provincial unit. Bhārgava stressed, however, that the party did not possess a meaningful existence of its own. It provided a forum for particular nationalist issues for other groups which served as the primary source of association.<sup>4</sup> Other interviewees as well as written sources unanimously agree that a meaningful Congress Party barely existed before 1920.<sup>5</sup>

Organizationally, therefore, the Congress Party did not have a formal structure of significance to capture as no meaningful power centre existed. It is more than coincidental that clear-cut factionalism developed within the Congress Party during the same period, 1919-1920, in which it developed into a meaningful entity and underwent a fundamental reorganization. Nor should it be surprising that communal considerations provided an important focus to the structuring of the factions.

One of the important communal issues which developed symbolic significance and contributed to the development of bi-factionalism in the Punjāb Congress arose from the Lucknow Pact of December, 1916. The major compromise in the agreement between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League recognized separate electorate for Hindūs and Muslims. The Muslim quota for the Punjāb Legislative Council was set

at one-half of the-elected Indian members.<sup>6</sup>

At the time of the Lucknow Pact, Punjāb and the Punjāb Congress manifested extremely weak political leadership. Lājpat Rāi lived in exile in the United States, Lālā Harkishen Lāl, then President of the Indian Association, was fully occupied with a financial crisis, and Fazl-i-Husain was deeply involved with a split in the Punjāb Muslim League. Punjāb, a reputable source concluded, "had no accredited leaders."<sup>7</sup>

Bitter opposition to separate electorates, however, came from the Hindū Mahāsabhā. Founded in 1908 for the purpose of safeguarding the political interests of the Hindū community, the Hindū Mahāsabhā opposed the Pact largely on the basis of undue appeasement of the Muslims. In Punjāb, most Hindū leaders belonged to the Hindū Mahāsabhā<sup>8</sup> and many such as Lālā Lājpat Rāi, Swāmī Shradhdhānand and Bhāi Parmānand linked with the Ārya Samāj.

Lālā Lājpat Rāi always had opposed separate electorates and strongly opposed the provisions of the Lucknow Pact. After returning to Punjāb in 1920, he found himself allied with one section of the Congress as against the other on this issue. Two interpretations of his position are possible. In his own writings, he stated that such provisions would prevent the integration or the harmonious working together of the two communities and would also qualify majority rule.<sup>9</sup> From this perspective, he took a non-communal position by basing his opposition to the Lucknow Pact on secular arguments. His chief lieutenant, Gopīchand Bhārgava, also strongly asserted that he was simply "not in favour of communal activities of Muslims" and thus was not anti-Muslim nor pro-Hindū in a communal sense.<sup>10</sup>

Bhārgava, on the other hand, admitted that Lājpat Rāi was "dubbed as a communalist" by those who opposed his stand.<sup>11</sup> The popular conception is perhaps best summarized by the following account :

In one respect, however, he (Lājpat Rāi) completely disagreed with some of his Congress colleagues. He never surrendered Hindū interests. He was as keen upon Hindū-Muslim unity as anyone else, but he never believed in the purchase of it by the payment of too heavy a price at the expense of the Hindū community.<sup>12</sup>

Certainly, Lājpat Rāi's position on separate electorates, in the words of a Congress publication, caused him "to suffer even displeasure of his dear comrades in the Congress"<sup>13</sup> and involved him more deeply in the affairs of the Hindū Mahāsabhā.

The comrades, whom he antagonized, are identified clearly by Lājpat Rāi as the "Non-Cooperation party" within the Congress during the 1920's.<sup>14</sup> Lājpat Rāi, known as an activist or extremist within the Congress and as seditious by the Government before his exile, could be categorized as rightwing or a moderate on this particular issue or communal dimension.

A second dimension, encompassing secular issues and involving tactics and strategy, overlapped and tended to reinforce the communal divisions. Mahātmā Gāndhī's call for a nationwide *satyāgraha* in protest against the passage of the second Rowlatt Bill in March, 1919, provided the context for the so-called extremists to gain prominence in the Punjāb Congress Party and the nationalist movement. Leading moderates such as Fazl-i-Husain agreed that a protest was in order, but opposed *satyāgraha* tactics as unconstitutional. Gradually, the moderates lost control of the protest movement and "after April 6th, the agitation passed into the hands of the extremists . . ."<sup>15</sup>

Prominent among the so-called extremists were Dr Satya Pāl, a Hindū physician, and Dr Saif-ud-Dīn Kitchlew, a Muslim lawyer. Kitchlew received his legal training at Cambridge and his Ph.D. in Germany. They were extremists along two dimensions relating to the factionalism that developed.

First, they favoured the use of tactics enjoined in the *satyāgraha* movement of 1919 and thereafter the non-cooperation movement. This position contrasted with the position of those who would not go beyond what they considered constitutional means or who, like Lājpat Rāi, "wavered from time to time between non-cooperative and parliamentary action."<sup>16</sup> Secondly, the Satya Pāl faction, as it began to be called, manifested more sensitivity and sympathy to Muslim fears and demands.<sup>17</sup> Whether they approved or disapproved of separate electorates in theory seemed less important than the fact that the Muslims strongly desired them.

Muslims and Hindūs temporarily set aside their differences during the Congress-led non-cooperation movement during 1920-1922. A communal issue involving the threatened dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire and the position of the Caliph affected Muslims throughout India. Punjāb, as a Muslim majority province, reacted strongly to the perceived threat to the Islāmic religion, and the non-cooperation movement provided the political channels for protest. In the Northwest Frontier area, the Khilāfat appeal dominated and the local Congress was popularly known as the Khilāfat Committee.<sup>18</sup>



Sikhs, moreover, also chose to channel their particularistic demands through the non-cooperation movement. Mobilization and politicization of the community accelerated since their first stirrings through the relatively aristocratic Singh Sabhās. The Ghadar revolutionary movement composed primarily of Sikhs and, in particular, the Gurdwārā or temple reform movement activated increasing numbers and led to direct linkages with the nationalist movement. An estimate of the politicization deriving from the Gurdwārā movement can be gained from the following : 30,000 Sikhs were arrested in the period from 1920-1925, 400 were killed, 2,000 wounded, and Rs. 15,00,000 were assessed in fines.<sup>19</sup>

For a short period it seemed as if internal differences were submerged within the glow of overall unity resulting from the common abhorrence of the Jalliānwālā Bāgh massacre of April, 1919, and the convergence of the nationalist, Muslim (Khilāfat) and Sikh streams into the nationalist movement. Communal and secular demands, in the exceptional context of the non-cooperation movement, were functionally related.

Lājpat Rāi quickly re-established his leadership of the Punjāb Congress upon returning in 1920. His deportation, subsequent exile, writings, and nationalist activities had developed his nationalist reputation. In his person he seemed to represent the suffering of Punjāb as well as the nationalist cause and he became popularly known as *Sher-i-Punjāb* (Lion of Punjāb).

The Satya Pāl group, which maintained control of the party until Lājpat Rāi's return, nonetheless remained as a distinct faction within the party. Unlike Lājpat Rāi, they supported the full non-cooperation programme from its inception and they were closer to the Muslims than the Lājpat Rāi adherents. The distinction seemed minor if not irrelevant during the course of the movement as the so-called moderates, e.g. Chhotū Rām and Fazl-i-Husain, withdrew from the Congress Party, while all the participants in the movement could, in the activist sense, be categorized as extremists. Following the cessation of the movement, however, the differences cropped up again in a major manner.

A new organizational structure resulted from the Nāgpur session of the Indian National Congress in 1920 "at which the whole Constitution was practically recast."<sup>20</sup> The reorganization was designed to alter the Congress from a party of the upper class and intellectuals to that of a mass movement.<sup>21</sup> In accordance with this goal, Gāndhijī set a membership quota of 9,00,000 for Punjāb. The recruiting was done primarily by students who left their educational institutions and about 6,00,000 were

enrolled; thereby "establishing the Congress in towns and villages for the first time."<sup>22</sup> The Gurdwārā reform movement which continued for at least three years after the termination of the non-cooperation movement was particularly successful in activating rural Sikhs.

The heretofore vague entity known as the Indian National Congress thus developed a meaningful structure in Punjāb and achieved recognition as the primary channel for secular national activities as well as for anti-government religious protest.

Communal considerations, however, continued to retard the development of nationalism in Punjāb and, in a concomitant manner, internal factionalism nearly rent the recently revitalized and reorganized party in two in the middle 1920's. The genesis of the crisis that erupted in 1925-1926 once again involved the policy towards contesting seats in the legislature. Chittaranjan Dās, a Congress leader from Bengāl and President of the Gayā Congress session in December, 1922, and Motīlāl Nehrū, then General Secretary, resigned their positions from the Congress and formed the Swarāj Party on January 1, 1923.<sup>23</sup> Lālā Lājpat Rāi, on his release from jail, joined the new party<sup>24</sup> thus reopening the issue in the Punjāb Congress regarding the extent to which nationalists would participate in governmental institutions.

The distinction between the Swarāj and Congress Party policy regarding what was referred to as "Council entry" appears to be a small one in retrospect. Congress policy until 1925 was against both elections to and participation in legislative bodies. Swarāj policy consisted of seeking elections and then trying to disrupt the legislature from within so as to force a more meaningful and representative system.<sup>25</sup>

Lājpat Rāi agreed with C. R. Dās and Motīlāl Nehrū on the secular issue of Council entry, but he soon broke with them regarding communal policy. In December, 1923, Das concluded a Hindū-Muslim pact in Bengāl with the support of the provincial Congress Party of Bengāl. It met with strong objections among communal Hindūs as having "surrendered the rights of the Hindūs"<sup>26</sup> and even more moderate Hindūs felt that Dās had "gone too far in trying to win the confidence of the Muslims."<sup>27</sup>

The Khilāfat issue which had evoked Hindū-Muslim cooperation became meaningless as Turkey became a secular state, and communal disorders reappeared in Punjāb.<sup>28</sup>

The revival of the communal issue and national and provincial Congress attempts to cope with it occasioned the first major split in the

Punjab Congress Party in 1925-1926. Somewhat ironically, Lālā Lājpat Rāi who previously conflicted with the Satya Pāl group and the national party over the issue of contesting for Council seats now opposed Congressites who were contesting under the party name for the first time. Moreover, on the national level, Lājpat Rāi openly fought with Motilāl Nehrū, his former ally in the Swarāj Party.

The Satya Pāl group, which had come into power in the provincial organization in 1923-24,<sup>29</sup> thus was confronted with public opposition from Lājpat Rāi and the Hindū Mahāsabhā. Lājpat Rāi's group was referred to by such different names as the Congress Nationalist Party,<sup>30</sup> the Independent Congress Party,<sup>31</sup> the Hindū Nationalist Party<sup>32</sup> and the Hindū Party.<sup>33</sup> Nomenclature in this particular case may have been of some importance as the Lājpat Rāi group drew from his followers who were in the Congress Party as well as from the Hindū Mahāsabhā. Some, of course, as Lājpat Rāi, were also normally in the Congress Party. As the various names imply, the party was composed solely of Hindūs and tapped various sources.

Congress Party members who had aligned themselves with the Lājpat Rāi group were torn by cross-cutting pressures in the 1925-1926 campaign. Lājpat's chief lieutenant, Gopīchand Bhārgava, "remained in Congress, but I worked with Lālā in his fight for the Central Assembly with the permission of the Congress President (Motilāl) Nehrū."<sup>34</sup> Lālā Jagat Nārāin joined with the Lājpat Rāi Congress group in Lāhore and faced similar cross pressures. Nārāin maintained that he supported the Congress candidate even though it caused him the "ill will of my friends in this respect."<sup>35</sup>

There was also some ambivalence among Hindūs in the Satya Pāl group. One strong Satya Pāl supporter felt that Lājpat Rāi "was right from the point of view of justice" and that the official Congress position was based on the principle that the Congress "should give everything that minorities (i.e. Muslims) demand." He, nonetheless, supported Satya Pāl but subsequently became a neutral as between the two factions.<sup>36</sup>

Other examples can be cited to illustrate the interaction between attitudes towards communal issues and factionalism.<sup>37</sup> The major points, however, are clear. Communal considerations related directly to the factional structuring of the Congress Party. In the 1925-1926 elections, moreover, the Lājpat Rāi faction operated both within and without the Congress Party. One assessment of the importance of communal issues,

co-authored by Satya Pāl, concluded that the major campaign issue used against the official Congress candidates was that "it [the Congress Party] has sold its conscience to Muhammadans and that Congressmen are in favour of cow-slaughter and are encouraging Muhammadans to establish an independent Muslim state in the Punjāb."<sup>38</sup>

The Congress Party's first attempt at election politics, consequently, turned out very poorly. According to Satya Pāl's assessment, "there was a very crushing defeat of the Congress candidates in the Punjāb."<sup>39</sup> All three seats allotted to Punjāb for the Central Legislative Assembly were won by what are contemporarily termed dissident Congressmen. Lājpat Rāi won two of the seats and Bakshī Tek Chand defeated Lālā Dunī Chand of Lāhore, the President of the Provincial Congress Committee.

It is notable that factional development in the Congress Party at this time primarily revolved around an urban Hindū base. Rural Hindūs in Haryānā tended to follow Sir Chhotū Rām, a leading member of the Unionist Party.

Sikhs during the Gurdwārā agitation had modelled their movement along the lines of Gāndhījī's nonviolent resistance campaign and, in certain matters, cooperated with the Congress. Up to 1937, however, Sikh politics flowed primarily through the Shiromanī Gurdwārā Parbandhak Committee and the Akālī Dal which had their own ascriptive concerns. It wasn't until October 7, 1925, that the SGPC approved the Sikh Gurdwārās Act after an intense conflict between the moderates and extremists within the Committee.<sup>40</sup> Closer ties with the Congress Party, so that Sikhs would enter the Congress faction system, did not develop until the 1936 election campaign.

Subtracting the Muslims, Sikhs, and rural Hindūs from Haryānā left the Punjāb Congress as relying primarily upon an urban Hindū social base. In that category, they competed with the Hindū Mahāsabhā. Defections based upon the communal issue temporarily tore the core of Congress Party base in two. Factionalism, in this case, was not institutionalized within the party but broke away or otherwise overflowed outside of the Congress political system. Factional conflict in 1925-1926, moreover, did not serve successfully in forging links so as to broaden the Congress system.

A few months after the elections the "independent" or "dissident" Congressmen returned to the Congress Party. Satya Pāl continued to control the top positions in the organization with Lālā Dunī Chand of

Lāhore as President and himself as General Secretary. The factional structure, however, had developed to where it permeated the entire party. Gopīchand Bhārgava administered what could be labelled as the opposing faction. "Anyone from below (Congress ranks) who wanted support went to one or the other (Satya Pāl or Bhārgava)."<sup>41</sup> Factional linkages also extended to the uppermost echelons of the national party where Maulānā Āzād supported the Satya Pāl group while Sardār Vallabhkhāt Patel supported the Lājpat-Bhārgava group.<sup>42</sup>

Up to independence the two factions continued to function in Punjāb with only two major changes : one involving the area of conflict and the other relating to the basic structure of the Bhārgava faction.<sup>43</sup> Basically, without going into detail, and thus allowing more time for analysis, the area of faction conflict was broadened by (1) the establishment of a Congress Assembly Party following the 1937 elections, and (2) the subsequent entry into the Bhārgava faction of the Akālī Dal Sikhs.

It is suggested that one of the major reasons that Sikhs associated with the Bhārgava faction relates directly to the Hindū-Muslim-Sikh communal triangle. It has been established that the Lājpat-Bhārgava faction was less willing to compromise with Muslims than the Satya Pāl faction. Sikh communal feelings towards Muslims were generally closer to the more conservative Bhārgava group orientation in this area than to the Satya Pāl group; in fact, their feelings were probably stronger. It would, therefore, be more natural for them to associate with the Bhārgava than the Satya Pāl faction. What might be termed "negative factionalism" seems to have stimulated the alliance, with the Bhārgava and Sikh groups both reacting to communal attitudes relating to Muslims. Secular reasons concerned primarily with Bhārgava's activities in constructive work may also have been of some importance.<sup>44</sup>

#### A SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Descriptive terms such as right and left, moderate, centrist and extremist have been used throughout this article. It is somewhat misleading to use such terms in Indian and Punjāb politics as particular issues and situations often result in differing kinds of alignments. Thus, Lālā Lājpat Rāi fits the extremist category in the first decade of the century as he participated in extra-constitutional agitations in alliance most frequently with the activist groups within the national Congress. Extremists challenged the strictly constitutional and petitioning approach

of the moderates.

Later, in the 1920's, Lājpat Rāi's role as regards the non-cooperation movement and communal issues is labelled as more conservative than the opposing faction within the Punjāb Congress. In the former case, the term moderate could be applied, but moderate does not quite properly apply to the communal issue. His group's position can be interpreted as being more *extreme*, rather than moderate, in refusing to compromise with Muslims to the degree that the Satya Pāl faction and national leaders such as Maulānā Āzād and the Nehrūs were willing to do. Then again, in 1928, Lājpat Rāi's group, and such Congress-Hindū Mahāsabhā leaders as Pandit Madan Mohan Mālaviya, participated fully and provided leadership to the Congress-led agitation against the Simon Commission.

In drawing any kind of a political spectrum within which the various groups may be aligned, it seems wisest to select the key issues that most strongly affected the political behaviour of the participants. Nationally and in the Punjāb two issues which can serve as guidelines were furnished by :

- (1) the attitude towards tactics and strategy employed in the *satyāgraha* and non-cooperation campaigns, basically a secular issue;
- (2) the attitude towards communal issues.

A left-right spectrum can then be drawn separately for each of the issues as well as a larger spectrum which includes both of them. It must be remembered that the spectrum is not based on economic criteria although the factional structures may also become infused with the economic dimension.

The Lājpat-Bhārgava faction could be distinguished from the Satya Pāl faction on the secular issue at various points in time, e. g. the beginning of the 1920-movement and on the issue of Council entry. Satya Pāl was looked upon by his followers, according to interviewees who participated in his group, as "more activist" and "more revolutionary" than the Lājpat-Bhārgava faction. The Naujawān Bhārat Sabhā, the revolutionary group in Punjāb that produced the famous martyr Bhagat Singh, chose to support the Satya Pāl group for these reasons rather than the Lājpat-Bhārgava group.<sup>45</sup>

In this case, the most important distinction existed between the groups rather than between the leaders. Lājpat Rāi, himself, assumed a charismatic role which frequently transcended the faction structures to provide province-wide leadership. Lājpat Rāi, the *Sher-i-Punjāb* (Lion of

Punjāb), manifested sufficient dynamism so that the term rightist or moderate as regards participation in the national movement does not seem apropos.

Gopīchand Bhārgava, although he participated actively and spent long periods in jail, actually appeared more representative of his group than Lājpat Rāi. On balance, it can be concluded that the Lājpat-Bhārgava group should be placed on the right or conservative side of the faction spectrum on the secular issue, but not, it should be emphasized, by any great margin.

Satya Pāl's group can be placed on the left side of the faction spectrum in regard to the secular issue as well as the communal issue which involved the attitudes and policies towards Muslims. There was more of a divergence between the two groups on the communal issue than on the secular one discussed above. Congress Muslims were unquestionably allied with Satya Pāl in this important area and the issue was never resolved between the two factions. It has been argued herein that the communal issue was the single most important one in pre-independence Punjāb and it is not surprising that political behaviour resulting from the conflict was a critical factor in fashioning and maintaining the faction structures.

The same faction structures extended up to and down from the national level of politics. Lājpat Rāi operated equally on both levels, but with his death the Punjāb lacked a truly national figure. Thereafter, Sardār Patel and the more conservative members of the national Congress leadership provided support to the Bhārgava faction while Maulānā Āzād with the support of Jawāharlāl Nehrū assisted the Satya Pāl faction. Factionalism at the state level, consequently, interrelated with factionalism at the national level in a clearly articulated manner.

As the faction structures developed in Punjāb, beginning in perhaps 1919 with the break between the moderates and extremists, they developed a permanency or stability that withstood the periods of close cooperation. The same two factions continued throughout the pre-independence period regardless of the fact that Bhārgava replaced Lājpat Rāi and Bhīm Sen Sachar replaced Satya Pāl.

There was little difference in the social bases of the two factions in the early period with the exception that the little Muslim support that went to Congress coalesced with the Satya Pāl group. Basically, both factions relied on urban Hindūs from non-agriculturalist castes and occupations. Similarly, in terms of the regional orientations, both groups drew from

the central Punjāb and the top leadership was concentrated in Lāhore and Amritsar.

Bhārgava's group broadened its support when the Akālī Sikhs entered Congress in the 1930's so as to forge Congress links with both the Sikh and rural orientations. Competition between the two Congress factions may have assisted in the entry and subsequent integration of the Sikhs into the Congress Party. There is little evidence to substantiate a hypothesis that the Bhārgava group bid for the support of the Akālīs so as to strengthen their position against the Satya Pāl group, but some interviewees advanced this position. One Akālī Dal M.L.A. who was first elected to the Assembly in a by-election in 1941, for example, alleged that an agreement was reached in 1937 between the Akālī Dal, or at least the Nāgoke faction of the Akālī Dal, and Bhārgava that they would be supported for particular positions within the Congress Party if they entered.<sup>46</sup> Other interviewees used the term "accommodating" to describe the relationship between Bhārgava and the Akālīs.

It should also be noted that the restricted franchise and the nature of reserved seats for each community presented structural problems that tended to reinforce rather than cut across already strong communal orientations.

The Congress Party's position *vis-a-vis* other parties was of critical importance to post-independence developments. Congress' first major victory, in retrospect, was in recovering from the drastic 1926 defeat by the Hindū Mahāsabhā so as to completely eclipse them as regards the "Hindū orientation" by 1946. Certainly, the communal orientation didn't disappear completely; part of it was integrated into a sympathetic Congress faction itself while less compromising communal elements reappeared in the post-independence period in the newly created Jan Sangh Party.

The Congress Party, nevertheless, seemed destined to continue as a secondary party in pre-partition Punjāb so long as the Unionist Party successfully maintained its Muslim base and used the rural and Jāt orientations therein to win crucial support from the other two major communities. Punjāb's pre-independence party system in truth revolved around the Unionist Party and its ability to successfully manipulate these orientations.

Irredentist Muslim feelings as institutionalized by the Muslim League totally changed the party system by taking over the Muslim orientation from the Unionist Party. By failing to maintain the Unionist linkages



with the other communities, the Muslim League led to the collapse of the on-going party system.

A vacuum was thereby created which only the Congress Party was able to fill after partition. Congress' greatest pre-independence weakness was in relationship to the Muslim orientation. This weakness became unimportant in post-partition Punjāb as all but a few Muslims left the province, and even they would gravitate to the Congress Party rather than to the non-Muslim communal alternatives.

Congress did forge direct channels to the rural and urban Sikhs. Moreover, its competitive faction structure enabled the integration of Hindū Jāts and other agriculturists who had no meaningful alternatives since the Hindū Mahāsabhā was urban based, the Unionist Party had disappeared, and local alternatives tended to prove unsuccessful. It is equally important that the faction pattern had developed over a relatively long period of time, so other groups, newly enfranchised or politically conscious for the first time, could find a place within it either by seeking entry or by being coaxed so as to buttress the strength of a weaker faction.

The regional bases of the Congress Party also proved capable of easy expansion in a manner that could be matched by no other party after the demise of the Unionist Party. Although concentrated in the central districts, the Congress Party did have a province-wide organization with units in each district. The Akālī Dal could never aspire to expand past the Sikh areas into Haryānā due to the communal composition of the party. Similarly, the Hindū Mahāsabhā was narrowly tied to an urban base which restricted expansion into rural areas in the central districts or into primarily rural Haryānā.

Although the Congress Party itself relied heavily on urban support, its leaders were subject to the national party rural emphasis and such leaders as Partāp Singh Kairon were already gaining prominence in the party and could be expected to exploit their rural orientation or image; in Kairon's case, he was a rural Jātt Sikh.

In a period of approximately thirty years, from 1920 to the first general elections in 1951, the Congress in Punjāb developed clearcut bi-factionalism at first patterned on communal and strategic considerations. These factions became a means whereby Congress representation, first narrowly based, broadened to include the full spectrum of Punjāb's religious, regional, and rural and urban orientations. Newly mobilized and politicized groups and individuals were integrated into the party system

via the faction system thereby further legitimizing the political system and enhancing national integration.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Proceedings of the Imperial Council*, 1919, quoted in H. N. Mitra, *Indian Annual Register*, I, 1920, p. 15.
2. A veteran nationalist, agreeing that the province was politically quiet prior to the Land Colonization Act, stated that its effect was such that a "revolutionary fervour gripped Punjab in 1907." Interview with Comrade Rāmchandra, Chandīgarh, April 2, 1964. Also, see Norman G. Barrier, *The Punjab Alienation of Land Bill of 1900* (Durham : Duke University Program in Comparative Studies Monograph Number Two, 1966), pp. 89 ff.
3. Interview with Dr Gopīchand Bhārgava, Chandīgarh, May 7, 1964.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Comrade Rāmchandra described the pre-1920 Congress as "an organization of armchair politicians." *Op. cit.* The most extreme statement was by Rizak Rām who asserted that there was "no real party before 1937." Interview, Chandīgarh, February 21, 1964. For published commentaries see the following : Azim Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain : A Political Biography* (Bombay : Longmans, Green and Co., 1946), p. 77. Dr Satya Pāl and Prabodh Chandra (Compilers), *Sixty Years of Congress* (Lāhore : Āzād Hind Publications Ltd., November, 1946), p. 135. Lālā Dunī Chand, *The Ulster of India, or an Analysis of the Punjab Problems* (Lāhore : 1936). Syed Nūr Ahmad, *Miān Fazl-i-Husain : A Review of His Life and Work* (Lāhore : M. M. Malik, The Punjab Educational Press, 1936), p. 9.
6. Rām Gopāl, *Indian Muslims : A Political History* (New York : Asia Publishing House, 1959), pp. 129-50.
7. Azim Husain, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
8. Sir C. Y. Chintāmani asserted: "In the Punjab, however, where the communal issue has ever been to the fore, Hindū leaders *without exception* were members of the Hindū Sabhā, including such men as Swāmī Shradhdhānand, Sir Pratul Chatterji, Rāi Bahādūr Kālī Prasanna Roy, Rāi Bahādūr Lāl Chand, Lālā Lājpat Rāi and Sir Shādī Lāl." (Emphasis added.) *Indian Politics Since the Mutiny* (Allāhābād : Kitābistān, 1937), p. 157.
9. Lājpat Rāi, *Ideals of Non-Cooperation and Other Essays* (Madrās : S. Ganesan, 1924), pp. 4-7.
10. "I know his mind's workings; he was not communal, he was patriotic." Interview with Gopīchand Bhārgava, Chandīgarh, May 7, 1964.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Chintāmani, *op. cit.*, p. 120.
13. Indian National Congress, *Congress Bulletin*, Numbers 9, 10, and 11 (September,

- October and November, 1960), p. 445.
14. Lājpat Rāi, *Ideals of Non-Cooperation*, p. 7.
  15. Azim Husain, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34.
  16. Chintāmani, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-20.
  17. Abdul Ghaffār Khān, a veteran Muslim Congressman from Ambālā, described Satya Pāl as "absolutely non-communal." Interview, Chandīgarh, March 11, 1964. Brishh Bhān, a former Chief Minister of PEPUSU and a leader in the Prajā Mandal movement in the pre-independence period, described the Satya Pāl group as "more radical and revolutionary" and "more conciliatory to Muslims" than the opposing faction. Interview, Chandīgarh, January 3, 1964.
  18. Feroz Chand, "Punjab's Part in the Freedom Fight," *Souvenir Indian National Congress* (Amritsar : Souvenir Publication Board Reception Committee, 1956), p. P-101.
  19. "The Sikh Movement," based on the papers of Sardār Gurbachan Singh, editor, *Akāl Nirmal Gazette*, Tarn Tāran, in H. N. and N.N. Mitra, *The Indian Quarterly Register*, I, 1925, p. 90. Also, see Tejā Singh, *The Gurdwārā Reform Movement and the Sikh Awakening* (Jullundur City : The Desh Bhagat Book Agency, 1922); Tejā Singh, *Essays in Sikhism* (Lāhore : Sikh University Press, 1944); Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, vol. II (New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 1966); Khushwant Singh, *The Sikhs* (London : George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1953); and Gandā Singh (editor), *Some Confidential Papers of the Akālī Movement* (Amritsar : SGPC, 1965).
  20. M. V. Raman Rāo, *Development of the Congress Constitution* (New Delhī : All India Congress Committee, July, 1958), p. 33.
  21. *Ibid.*
  22. Interview with Comrade Rāmchandra, Chandīgarh, April 2, 1964.
  23. Hemendranāth Dās Gupta, *Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Dās* (Delhī : Director, Publications Division, Government of India, 1960), p. 85.
  24. Satya Pāl and Chandra, *op. cit.*, p. 345.
  25. In his presidential address delivered at the session of the Indian National Congress held at Gayā in December, 1922, Dās states the case for Council entry with the following : "These Councils must therefore be either mended or ended. Hitherto we have been boycotting the Councils from outside. We have succeeded in doing much...(but) these Councils are still there. It should be the duty of the Congress to boycott the Councils more effectively from within." Quoted in Dās Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 190.
  26. Chintāmani, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-160.
  27. Dās Gupta, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-101. Dās' Bengāl Pact was anticipated in his Gayā Presidential Address in December, 1922. He stated that the Lucknow Pact should be reaffirmed and an "emphatic recognition of each other's right..." *Ibid.*, pp. 179-80.
  28. Government of Punjab, *Memorandum Prepared for the Use of the Indian Statutory Commission*, vol. I, part I, *Descriptive Matter* (Lāhore : Superintendent, Government Printing, 1922), p. 111. Azim Husain, *op. cit.*, pp. 178-79. K. L. Gaubā, *The Rebel Minister : The Story of the Rise and Fall of Lālā Harkishen Lāl* (Lāhore : Allied Indian Publishers, c. 1938), pp. 154-55.

29. Interview with Khān Abdul Ghaffār Khān, Chandīgarh, March 11, 1964.
30. Interview with Gopīchand Bhārgava, then Lājpat Rāi's chief lieutenant in the Congress Party, Chandīgarh, May 7, 1964.
31. Interview with Comrade Rāmchandra, a supporter of the Satya Pāl group in the 1926 elections, Chandīgarh, April 2, 1964.
32. Interview with Lālā Jagat Nārāin, a member of Lājpat Rāi's group at the time, but he supported the official Congress candidate in the 1926 elections, Chandīgarh, March 10, 1964.
33. Interview with Master Harī Singh, Congress member of the Punjāb Legislative Assembly in 1937 and Communist member of the Punjāb Legislative Council in 1964, Chandīgarh, March 2, 1964. Officially, Lājpat Rāi's group was generally referred to as the Hindū Party within the Legislative Council. Government of Punjāb, *Memorandum...Indian Statutory Commission*, 1929, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
34. Interview with Gopīchand Bhārgava, Chandīgarh, May 7, 1964. Satya Pāl, on the other hand, maintained that Bhārgava assisted the anti-Satya Pāl candidates. Satya Pāl and Chandra, *op. cit.*, p. 346.
35. Lālā Jagat Nārāin, "Why I Resigned From Congress," *Hind Samāchār* (October 30, 1956), p. 3 (translated from Urdū).
36. Interview with Comrade Rāmchandra who was editor of Lājpat Rāi's newspaper, *Bande Mātaram*, but resigned in 1926 when Rāi decided to oppose the Congress Party. Chandīgarh, April 1, 1964.
37. E.g., see Gaubā, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-52.
38. Satya Pāl and Chandra, *op. cit.*, p. 346.
39. *Ibid.*
40. *The Tribune* (Lāhore), October 8, 1925, 3 : 3, October 10, 1925, 3 : 3.
41. Interview with Comrade Rāmchandra, Chandīgarh, April 2, 1964.
42. There was unanimity concerning this linkage from all interviewees. Maulānā Āzād, in his autobiography, maintained that "I had never been identified with any particular section of the Congress." Nevertheless, he continued, "during the thirties, Congress was sharply divided between what were called the rightists and the leftists. The rightists were regarded as the champions of the vested interests. The leftists, on the other hand, prospered on their revolutionary zeal. I gave due weight to the fears of the rightists but at the same time my sympathies were with the leftists in the matter of reform." *India Wins Freedom* (Bombay : Orient Longmans, 1959), pp. 22-23.
43. Lājpat Rāi died on November 27, 1928. Thereafter, Gopīchand Bhārgava was the unquestioned leader of the group.
44. Interviewees had the following comments : Bhārgava stated that "in the 1937 election, some Sikhs got elected on a purely Congress ticket, some on Akālī. After six months all were just Congress." Interview, Chandīgarh, May 7, 1964. Master Harī Singh, a Sikh Congressite at the time, stated that the Akālīs joined Bhārgava because he was "more accommodating." Interview, Chandīgarh, March 2, 1964. Comrade Rāmchandra maintained that there was a "psychological alliance between Gopīchand and the Akālīs." Bhārgava, he said, was a good fund raiser as well as constructive worker for the Sikhs. He ran the Spinner Association, Khādī Boards and was active in other constructive work. Chandra also felt that these activities

led the Sikhs to place a higher valuation on Bhārgava's moral character. Interview, Chandīgarh, April 2, 1964.

45. Interview with Comrade Rāmchandra, Chandīgarh, April 2, 1964. Rāmchandra was the first President of the *Naujawān Bhārat Sabhā* in 1924 at which time Bhagat Singh was General Secretary. Interview with Ganpat Rāi, Ambālā Cantonment, January 17, 1964. Ganpat Rāi was secretary of the local and provincial units and succeeded Bhagat Singh when the latter was underground. Subsequently, Rāi was associated with *The Tribune*.
46. Interview with Gurbakhsh Singh, M. L. A., from Gurdāspur, Chandīgarh, November 30, 1963.

## RESEARCH ON MODERN PUNJĀB HISTORY CURRENTLY BEING CONDUCTED IN THE PUNJĀB\*

JOHN C. B. WEBSTER

### I

To the historian from the West who finds the annual production of doctoral dissertations and monographs on the history of his own country to be so enormous as to make his own labours rather meaningless, Indian history presents a wide-open and exciting field of study. Since the sheer bulk of historical writing on India is far less, the researcher wishing to tackle historical themes of considerable significance and interest is unlikely to make the unpleasant discovery that ten to twenty other people have only recently covered much the same ground. Given sound research methods and a capacity for hard work (and not necessarily the rare gift of genius), the historian of India can still make an important contribution to what is known about this country's past. What is true of Indian history is even more true of Punjāb history, since historians of India have generally preferred "All-India" to the region as their unit of study.

A quick examination of the historical works on the Punjāb reveals that most studies deal not with the Punjāb so much as with the Sikh people. Much of this has been due to British fascination with the Sikhs as well as to the Sikhs' interest in their own history. Moreover, it has been the years from 1469, when the first Sikh Gurū, Gurū Nānak, was born, up to 1849, when the British annexed the Punjāb from its Sikh rulers, that has received by far the largest amount of scholarly attention, as that has been considered (quite rightly) to be the definitive period in the history of the Sikhs. The result of this has been a tendency both to equate Punjāb history with the history of the Sikh people (who before 1966 were a minority and before 1947 a very small minority in the Punjāb) and to neglect modern Punjāb history. Both tendencies are clearly reflected in the undergraduate and M.A. syllabi of the universities in the Punjāb. The undergraduate course in Punjāb history covers the period from 1469 to 1858 and few if any topics deal with non-Sikhs except in relation to the Sikhs. The two M.A. papers in Punjāb history

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\* Written in 1973. Thus some of the work described as "in process" has since been completed and other work, not mentioned here, begun.

cover the same period and on up to 1920 or so, but the post-annexation section is largely ignored. Moreover, there is as yet no general history of the Punjāb for the years following 1849 to which students might be referred.

It is both natural and right to consider historical research to be an international enterprise in which scholars of all nationalities can cooperate and contribute. Certainly this is true of modern Punjāb history, which has attracted the attention of a number of western scholars, some of whom have published their findings in India so as to make them readily available to scholars here. For them the work of Punjābī scholars is valuable as an aid to further research in and a fuller understanding of an area of common interest. The Punjābī may treat the work of foreign scholars in similar fashion, although perhaps with less detachment since it is the history of *their own people* which is under study. However, the contribution which Punjābī scholars are making to the study of their recent past has consequences which go beyond "the development of the field" because Punjābī undergraduate history students are being left in ignorance of that portion of their history which has had the greatest immediate influence upon their present circumstances, while those of them who are not Sikhs are given little Punjāb history with which they can personally identify. If this situation is to be rectified, either more research has to be done in modern Punjāb history or else that which has been done must be put together in usable form. Since this is primarily a Punjābī concern, it may be useful to examine what Punjābīs are doing about it.

Research in this field is being conducted primarily in and through the universities in the State. Panjāb University, Punjābī University, Kurukshetra University (now in Haryānā), Punjāb Agricultural University and Gurū Nānak Dev University all have departments of history which are devoting attention to this field. Here we shall describe both the individual research being conducted by faculty or doctoral candidates and the departmental projects being undertaken in each of these universities. In addition we shall examine the proceedings of the annual Punjāb History Conference as well as the issues of *Panjāb Past and Present* through which the fruits of historical research have been shared.

## II

Panjāb University in Chandigarh, the post-partition Indian successor to the University of the Panjāb at Lāhore, has produced by far the largest

number of doctoral dissertations in modern Punjāb history. Most of these deal with the policies and activities of the Government : "North-West Frontier Policy of the Government of India (1849-1899)" (K. R. Prabhākar, 1951); "Social Legislation in the Punjāb since 1849" (Iqbāl Nāth, 1959); "Governor of the Punjāb : A Constitutional Study, 1937-1947" (Narindra Kumār, 1961); "Punjāb Legislature, 1909-1937" (Rām Mūrti Uppal, 1964); "Land Taxation in the Punjāb, 1919-1960" (Sādhū Singh Kāhlon, 1964); "The Development of Judicial Administration in the Punjāb, 1849-1947" (Raghunāth Rāi, 1965); "Land Revenue Administration in the Punjāb from 1849 to 1901" (Inderjīt Sharmā, near completion); and "The Durand Line : A Background View" (Ravi Indar Malhotrā, near completion). Closely related to these, if one can judge by the content and organization of the subject matter, are two theses on the social and economic history of the Punjāb, the first by Gurbaksh Singh Chhābrā covering the period from 1849 to 1901<sup>1</sup> and the second by Bakhtāwar Singh picking up from there and carrying on to 1939. A doctoral dissertation in economics was written on "Punjāb Money-Lender—his Growth and Decline (under British rule)" by Manohar Lāl Seth in 1954.

Several theses have also been written on the history of Punjāb politics, especially with reference to nationalist activity. These are Gurdev Singh Deol, "The Role of the Ghadar Party in the National Movement" (1965);<sup>2</sup> Kirpāl Singh "Partition of the Punjāb" (1966);<sup>3</sup> K. C. Gulātī, "Origin and Development of Akālī Party in the Punjāb up to 1947" (1967?); Dharmavīra, "Har Dayāl and the Revolutionary Movements of His Times" (n.d.); S.N. Joshī, "The Akālī Movement and its Impact on Nationalist Movement" (in process);<sup>4</sup> and Joginder Singh Dhankī, "Lālā Lājpat Rāi and Indian Nationalism" (in process).

A few dissertations in the final stages of preparation suggest that new lines of investigation are now being pursued. Rājā Rām's "Impact of the First World War on the Punjāb" has just been accepted (1973). R.L. Dewān, whose "Social Change in the Jullundur Doāb from 1846 to 1901" is very near completion, has already given two papers based on this research at the Punjāb History Conference.<sup>5</sup> Finally, a similar type of thesis on "The Impact of British Rule on Ludhiānā District" by Sumīr Khoslā (now Chaudhry) is almost complete.

While the greatest amount of research on modern Punjāb history has come from Panjāb University, it is at Punjābī University, in Patiālā that the most systematic and concerted attempt to write a history of the



Punjab is being made. The "advancement of Punjabi studies"<sup>6</sup> was one of the basic purposes for the University's being established in 1962 and the Department of Punjab Historical Studies was one of the first departments the University created (1963). This department along with the later but closely related Department of History has laid special stress upon departmental projects and so the number of individual research works has been comparatively small.

Under its first director, Dr Gandā Singh (1963-1966), the Department of Punjab Historical Studies began three major projects. The first to be completed was *A Bibliography of the Panjāb* by Dr Gandā Singh (Patiālā : Punjabi University, 1966). The other two are still in process. One is an eight-volume history of the Punjab organized on the Cambridge History model, with individual chapters being assigned to a number of outside scholars. Volume eight of this history deals with "Punjab Under the British" and Part II of this volume, which is devoted to the freedom movement in the Punjab, is now ready to go to the press. The other major project is a four-volume collection of documents related to the history of the freedom movement in the Punjab. The first volume deals with 1857, the second with the Kūkās, the third with the period from 1880 to 1900 with special reference to Mahārājā Duleep Singh, and the fourth volume with the period from 1900 to 1920. Of these, only volume three (edited by Dr Gandā Singh) has been published so far.

In 1967 Dr Faujā Singh Bājwā took over as Head of both the Department of Punjab Historical Studies and the Department of History. Under him the two major unfinished projects launched by Dr Gandā Singh have been continued and one new one taken on. This is the preparation of a Who's Who of Punjab Freedom Fighters. This project was begun initially by the Punjab Government in 1960, was entrusted to the Punjab State Archives at Patiālā the next year, and since 1967 it has been the responsibility of the Department of Punjab Historical Studies. The motivation behind this work has been both historical and "to express the nation's gratitude to those who struggled for its independence, and to preserve their names to be remembered by posterity."<sup>7</sup> Investigation for this work has been carried on by members of the department who have had to deal with people far less disinterested than they in who should be included and hence remembered by posterity, if not honoured by the present ! This has made not only the determination of criteria for inclusion (e.g. what exactly constitutes "participation" or "freedom fighting") but also the authentication and evaluation of evi-

dence (e.g. "was X in prison as a freedom fighter or as a government informer?") very touchy problems indeed. Given these problems, it has been difficult to do a foolproof job.<sup>8</sup> One volume of this Who's Who is now out and two smaller volumes which are by-products of this project have also come out. One is *Eminent Freedom Fighters of Punjab*,<sup>9</sup> which provides two- to three-page biographies of ninety-two Punjabi freedom fighters selected according to their leadership role or their having spent at least five years in jail. The other is *A Brief Account of Freedom Movement in the Punjab*<sup>10</sup> which is Dr Faujā Singh's introductory essay to the above two works.

The department is also preparing a work on the historians of the Punjab with a volume soon to appear on those who have written in English. Two studies on towns in the Punjab—on Patialā and Sirhind—have been completed and more projected.<sup>11</sup> An oral history project has recently been started and a field investigator hired. Several lectures in the Sītā Rām Kohli Memorial Lecture series have been published, Sri Rām Sharmā's *Punjab in Ferment in the Beginning of the 20th Century* being the most relevant for the purposes of this essay.<sup>12</sup> The number of doctoral dissertations in the field of modern Punjab history produced by the department has been few. Ramesh Wālīā's "Prajā Mandal Movement in East Punjab States" has been published by the University; Gurdarshan Singh's "The Singh Sabhā Movement" is currently with the examiners; and A.C. Arorā's "British Relations with the Cis-Satluj States" will be submitted soon. A number of M.A. history theses have been written on modern Punjab and an M. Litt. thesis on "Historical Writings in Punjabi during the 19th Century" has been registered.

In addition to its own research work, the Department of Punjab Historical Studies has provided two important forums for historians interested in the Punjab. The first is the Punjab History Conference, first organized by Dr Gandā Singh in 1965 and now ready to meet for its eighth session. This conference follows the pattern of the Indian History Congress with Presidential addresses by a General President and Sectional Presidents for Ancient, Medieval, and Modern Punjab History, respectively. Participants present papers on a wide variety of subjects but these are not grouped around any set theme; each paper is given as much discussion by the general audience as time or general interest permits. Among the more popular topics treated in the papers have been 1857, the Akālī movement, Mahārājā Duleep Singh, the British and various Sikh rulers. The conference's main purpose clearly

has been to stimulate rather than to give direction to research. Only the Presidential addresses provide an occasion for the latter but this opportunity has not been availed of as yet.

The other forum is the semi-annual journal, *Panjāb Past and Present*, begun in 1967 and still edited by Dr Gandā Singh. Its purpose has been to encourage the study of and research in Punjāb history "in all its aspects." It includes not only scholarly articles (original and reprints) but also a number of original sources not readily available but nonetheless deemed useful to future students of the subject in order to make the journal "a series of reference books on the history and culture of the Punjāb."<sup>13</sup> To date there have been in addition to the above, a number of bibliographic essays by Dr Gandā Singh as well as special centenary issues on Gurū Nānak (vol. III, 1969), Bhāi Vīr Singh (vol. VI, No. 2, 1972) and The Singh Sabhā and other Socio-Religious Movements in the Punjāb 1850-1925 (vol. VII, No. 1, 1973).

When the Punjāb was partitioned for the second time in 1966, Kurukshetra University found itself on the Haryānā side of the boundary. Although there are signs that it is giving attention now to developing the history of Haryānā,<sup>14</sup> nonetheless two Ph.D. dissertations on modern Punjāb history—S.C. Mittal, "History of Freedom Movement in Punjāb 1900-1929" and Y.P. Bajāj, "Chaudharī Chhotū Rām and His Times" were completed in 1972 and a third has just been begun ("Punjāb under the East India Company : A Study of Government and Society"). In addition two members of the Department of History have prepared works on modern Punjāb history. Professor V. N. Datta, the head of the department, is the author of *Amritsar Past and Present* (Amritsar : The Municipal Committee, 1967) and *Jalliānwālā Bāgh* (Kurukshetra, 1969). He also has a work in press on the Punjāb Disturbances which will be published by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study in Simlā. Dr K.C. Yādav who did his doctoral dissertation at Jaipur in 1966 on "Revolt of 1857 in Punjāb" has recently prepared a paper for the Institute of Historical Studies in Calcuttā on "Nationalistic Movement in Punjāb, 1849-1947."

The Punjāb Agricultural University in Ludhiānā has a Department of Languages, Culture and History whose educational function is to add breadth to an agricultural curriculum. Under the inspiration and supervision of the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Dr M.S. Randhāwā, a project on the "Social History of the Punjāb" has been begun and assigned to this department. Although both Dr S. S. Bal, the head of

the department, and Dr Rājā Rām are specialists in modern Punjāb history,<sup>15</sup> their work on this project has been confined thus far to the pre-modern period. In addition to this research project, the University has also established a Social History Museum.

The newest university in the Punjāb is Gurū Nānak Dev University at Amritsar founded in 1969, the year of Gurū Nānak's 500th birth anniversary. The Department of History was established in 1971 with Dr J. S. Grewāl as Professor and Head. At the present time only this writer, who is a part-time lecturer in the department, has done research in modern Punjāb History. However, a monograph on the Nirankārīs and a doctoral dissertation by S. S. Hans on "Sikh Historians on the Sikhs 1600-1900" are being planned. The University is also planning to publish the letters of Ūdham Singh (Sir Michael O'Dywer's assassin) as well as a monograph on the Ahmadiyāhs by Dr Spencer Lavan of Tufts University. In the Department of Political Science, Mr Harish Kumār Purī is completing a doctoral dissertation on "Ghadar Party : A Study in Militant Nationalism."

Finally, brief mention should be made of the Christian Institute of Sikh Studies at Baring Union Christian College in Batālā. While the bulk of the Institute's recent research has focused upon the contemporary scene, the present writer, who is Acting Director of the Institute, has just completed a revision of his doctoral dissertation under the title "The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India" which he hopes will soon be published as well as an article on "Mission Sources of Nineteenth Century Punjāb History" for a forthcoming work on sources of Punjāb history.

### III

The above is a full but not an exhaustive list of recent research work in the field of modern Punjāb history conducted in the Punjāb. Several characteristics seem worth noting. First, greatest stress has been laid upon British policies on the one hand and the nationalist movement on the other. This is very much in keeping with general trends in this country in the field of modern Indian history. Secondly, these studies of Punjābī politics and society have paid particular attention to the activities of the Sikhs. This can be explained in terms of the recent Sikh resurgence or the recent cluster of anniversaries of events important in the history of the Sikhs or the fact that Indian scholars are cut off from

valuable source materials in Lāhore. The imbalance may be rectified somewhat in 1975 when the Ārya Samāj celebrates its 100th anniversary—an event for which a large amount of historical writing may be expected ! The third is that a lot of spadework has been done to prepare the ground for further research—the gathering and publication of source materials, the holding of conferences and the publication of a journal. The question is, given these stimuli, what kind of new work now will be done.

As mentioned earlier, the presidents of the modern Punjāb section of the Punjāb History Conference have an excellent opportunity to address themselves to this question. Since some of the presidents are singularly well-placed for influencing research in the field, it may be worthwhile to examine what they have had to say.

The first president of the modern Punjāb section was Dr Faujā Singh Bājwā who, a year and a half later, came to Punjābī University to head its history programme. In his address Dr Faujā Singh argued strongly for viewing modern Punjāb history in terms of Western impact and Indian response. He dated the modern period of Punjāb history from the time of the British annexation and the commencement of the Western impact upon Punjāb for this reason. The lacunae he noted in research so far conducted (1965) in the field—the social and economic policy of the British Government, the Western impact upon the people, the role of the Punjāb in the freedom struggle, the evolution and functioning of its political institutions, the Unionist experiment—all bear the stamp of this interpretation, as do (to a lesser degree) the generalizations about certain aspects of Punjāb history which he felt needed serious re-examination.<sup>16</sup>

The next three Presidents—Dr A. C. Banerjee, Dr O.P. Bhatnāgar, and Dr Ambā Prasād—were from outside Punjāb, were not specialists in Punjāb history, and therefore were not in a position to give the same kind of direction to interested scholars as Dr Faujā Singh. Professor Banerjee took the view (without stating his reasons for it) that modern Punjāb history begins with Ranjīt Singh ; most of his address, therefore, dealt with that period. However, when dealing with the post-annexation period he mentioned three areas in which he felt further research could be done : the revenue and civil (including judicial) administration of the British, the background and events leading to “the tragedy of 1947” (a reference to partition and not to independence), and the religious ferment in the Punjāb stimulated by Christian preaching and Western education.<sup>17</sup>

Professor Bhatnagar dwelt on what had been done rather than on what needed doing, while Dr Ambā Prasād summed up what he considered the main currents of modern Punjāb history to be : suffering, a synthetic culture, communalism (injected by non-Punjābī elements), the warm response to the West, importance of the common man. He pointed to the need for district studies and, at the end, warned his audience against the dangers of both "regional nationalism" and "the uncontrolled operation of vested upper class interests."<sup>18</sup>

In 1971 Dr P.L. Mehrā, the present Head of the Department of History at Panjāb University in Chandīgarh, offered the participants a new interpretation of modern Punjāb history (perhaps influenced by the "green revolution" and other recent economic changes in the Punjāb) in his presidential address. Dr Mehrā divided the modern history of the Punjāb into three periods. The first ran from annexation in 1848 up to the Land Alienation Act in 1901 ; this was essentially the Punjāb which the British inherited from Ranjīt Singh and his successors. The second extended from 1901 to 1947 ; during this period, as in the previous period, the basic problem, in Dr Mehrā's estimation, was land. The third running from 1947 to the present, poses two important problems for investigation—the rapid growth of small-scale industry and the agricultural revolution. This division of modern Punjāb history and the rationale behind it suggests to the historian a very different starting point for research from the "Western impact—Indian response" view put forward by Dr Faujā Singh six years earlier ; moreover, it offers research possibilities which still have not been explored properly. At the close of his address, Dr Mehrā called for closer inter-university cooperation in developing a strategy and mapping out a course of action in the study of Punjāb history.<sup>19</sup> However, to date neither the strategy nor the course of action has appeared.

"Western impact—Indian response" and economic development are not the only perspectives from which modern Punjāb history may be written. They are, however, the only two which have been presented at the Punjāb History Conference and therefore may be the only ones (other than the imperial one) with which Punjābī historians are at all familiar, unless they have made a point of analyzing the writings of their counterparts in the West whose work on the Punjāb bears the marks of modernization theory. The important consideration in accepting or rejecting these different perspectives is certainly not who holds them ; it is their utility as aids to understanding the past. It may be that some

give a very distorted view of the past while others have yielded up about as much original research as they are capable of. In either case, it becomes necessary to consider new ones so that our knowledge of the past may increase.

#### IV

This survey suggests that modern Punjāb history is by no means a barren field. Punjāb scholars have already done a considerable amount of research in it—more perhaps than most historians realize, let alone utilize. It is, moreover, a growing field ; here in the Punjāb a lot of research is currently in progress and much ground work has been done to make further work possible. The time has now come to take stock of the field as a whole and set some guidelines for its future development, for the quantity of research far outweighs the amount of public consideration of its present value or future direction. This is all the more urgent since a lot of research has been carried out at the request of outside agencies—Government or groups with anniversaries to celebrate—and not necessarily according to the academic priorities of the historical community itself. Such an assessment involves far more than suggesting lacunae to fill or imbalances to correct with Ph.D. dissertations and research projects here and there. It demands a vision of the whole, of the most fruitful framework within which the story of modern Punjāb history can now be told. In evaluating the fruitfulness of the various approaches which come to mind, scholarly considerations—including a concern for sound methodology—must be kept constantly to the forefront. However, since our scholars are also teachers, the need of Punjābī students for a history with which they can *all* identify and which will help them understand their present should not be forgotten.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Delhī : Sterling Publishers, 1962.
2. Delhī : Sterling Publishers, 1969.
3. Revised by Sri Rām Sharmā (Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1972).
4. Mr Joshī has already presented two papers on the Akālīs to the Punjāb History Conference, i.e. "Circumstances Leading to the Rise of the Akālī Movement,"

- Punjab History Conference Third Session, March 9-10, 1968 : Proceedings* (Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1969), pp. 298-303 and "Origin of the Akālīs," *Punjab History Conference Fifth Session, March 8-10, 1970 : Proceedings* (Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1971), pp. 220-230.
5. "Change in the Attitude of Jullundur Doāb Khatrīs Towards Female Infanticide," *Punjab History Conference Third Session, March 9-10, 1968 : Proceedings* (Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1969), pp. 219-222 and "Degeneration of Village Communal Character in the Jullundur Doāb under the British Rule," *Punjab History Conference Fifth Session, March 8-10, 1970 : Proceedings* (Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1971), pp. 208-219.
  6. The Punjābī University Act 1961 ( Punjāb Act No. 35 of 1961 ) As Amended by The Punjābī University (Amendment) Act 1969 (Punjāb Act No. 23 of 1969). *Punjābī University, Patiālā—Calendar* (Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1970), I : 1.
  7. Faujā Singh, *Who's Who : Punjab Freedom Fighters* (Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1972), I : vii.
  8. *Ibid.*, p. x.
  9. Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1972.
  10. Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1972.
  11. The one on Sirhind edited by Dr Faujā Singh has been published under the title *Sirhind Through the Ages*.
  12. An expanded edition of this which includes relevant documents is Srī Rām Sharmā, *Punjab in Ferment* (New Delhi : S. Chānd & Co., 1971).
  13. Gandā Singh, "Editorial," *Panjab Past and Present*, I (April, 1967).
  14. When the Institute of Historical Studies held its annual conference at Kurukshetra in October, 1972, one of the conference themes was "Sources of the History of Haryānā." Dr K. C. Yādav has two books written in Hindī on the history of Haryānā in the press just now, one a general history and the other a history of the freedom movement in Haryānā from 1803 to 1947.
  15. Dr Bal is the author of *British Policy towards the Panjab (1844-49)* (Calcuttā : New Age Publishers, 1971), while Dr Rājā Rām wrote *Jallīānwālā Bāgh Massacre* (Chandīgarh : Panjāb University, 1969) before completing his doctorate.
  16. *Punjab History Conference First Session, November 12-14, 1965 : Proceedings* (Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1966) pp. 134-142.
  17. *Punjab History Conference Second Session, October 28-30, 1966 : Proceedings* (Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1968) pp. 125-133.
  18. *Punjab History Conference Fifth Session, March 8-10, 1970 : Proceedings* (Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1971), pp. 129-137.
  19. *Punjab History Conference Sixth Session, March 19-20, 1971 : Proceedings* (Patiālā : Punjābī University, 1972), pp. 190-198.



## SYNCRETISM AND THE FORMATION OF THE SIKH TRADITION

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In the comparative study of religions, some scholars and most writers of introductory textbooks have categorized the religion of the Sikhs as a syncretism. They have regarded Sikhism as an attempt to reconcile and combine Hindūism and Islām in India in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The purpose of this study is to examine the validity of categorizing Sikhism in this way. In the process of doing this we must consider briefly how the term "syncretism" tends to be used in comparative religious study and then move to a more thorough analysis of the evidence upon which the claims for syncretism in the Sikh tradition have been based.

At best, the word "syncretism" is vague; at worst it is highly emotive and misleading when applied to any religious tradition. The term has come to mean an attempt at a union or reconciliation of diverse or conflicting religious traditions. Scholars have used syncretism as a way of describing and categorizing certain religious phenomena at decisive points of inter-religious contact and influence. Used in this way, it has been a fairly useful term even though a vague one. The problems with the use of the term arise when it is used as a theological judgement. Western religions, that is, Judaism, Christianity and Islām, which point to specific revelatory events in history for the authority of their religious claims, have seen syncretism as a grafting on foreign elements to the purity of this revelatory authority. In this case, syncretism means a bastardization of the pure religion, and therefore a threat to the truth of the faith. This use of the term as a theological judgement in the context of Western religions has given syncretism its emotive and pejorative character. This use of the term syncretism limits its value as a descriptive device for scholars. Even if a scholar carefully defines what syncretism is with respect to Sikhism, that definition may not be applicable to certain phenomena in some Japanese religions which also may appear to be "syncretistic."

All this foregoing discussion of the term is to point out the problems involved with the word itself. Even given these problems, the phenomenon of religious borrowing and reconciling of diverse elements in traditions does go on in the history of religions. Whether one calls it synthesis, eclecticism, syncretism, or whatever, the phenomenon has to be dealt with. The question we now come to is, did this phenomenon of religious borrowing and reconciling occur in the formation of Sikhism as it has been argued? If it did not, then what has been going on in Sikhism and how is it to be explained?

✓ “Sikhism is the fruit of hybridization between Islām and Hindūism,” writes A. C. Bouquet. J. B. Noss echoes this judgement in claiming Sikhism as an “outstanding example of conscious syncretism.”<sup>2</sup> He goes so far as to entitle the chapter on Sikhism “A Study in Syncretism” in his textbook, *Man’s Religions*. The prestigious historian Arnold Toynbee, in a foreword to the UNESCO-sponsored anthology of Sikh scriptures in English translation, writes, “The (Sikh) religion is the ✓ creation of ex-Hindū religious enquirers who adopted monotheism and rejected caste under the inspiration of Islām.”<sup>3</sup> To support this case even further, Khushwant Singh maintains, “Sikhism was born out of a ✓ wedlock between Hindūism and Islām.”<sup>4</sup> This is the usual interpretation. Sikhism is a synthesis drawn from Hindūism and Islām which consciously sought to reconcile the differences between these two great but opposed traditions.

Is this interpretation adequate? In a larger sense Sikhism does stand historically and geographically in the midst of the confrontation between Islām and Hindūism in northern India. Sikhism cannot be totally explained from within Hindūism alone. It appears to have taken on certain beliefs, such as monotheism, which only could have come from Islām. But to pursue this deeper, we must ask what is being synthesized or reconciled. Does what appears to be a borrowing from either Hindūism or Islām remain so after the evidence has been analyzed? Does calling Sikhism a syncretism clarify or confuse our understanding of what is really going on in the development of this tradition?

To call Sikhism a syncretism implies certain presuppositions which we shall test against the evidence. First, it implies that Islām and Hindūism in India in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were externally identifiable religious systems. That is to say that they both were great monolithic structures standing at odds against one another. Between them came Gurū Nānak trying to find the best of both, mix them

together, and produce a new tradition acceptable to all. The scholar's job would be much simpler if there was a clearly defined Hindūism and Islām in India during this period. But, as we shall see, there was not. The religious complexion of the Punjāb at the time of Gurū Nānak and the Gurūs following him was far more diverse than these presuppositions will allow.

The second presupposition behind this use of syncretism is that the origin of Sikhism, its ideas and institutions can be clearly located within the traditions from which they were borrowed. Take the example of Sikh monotheism. Who were the rigid monotheists in India at this time? The Muslims, of course. What would Muslims demand first if they were to consider becoming Sikhs? The belief in one God. The conclusion is then drawn that the Sikhs got their monotheism from Islām. The Sikhs were monotheists to be sure, but were the Muslims the only monotheists around at this time? Is the monotheism of Sikhism the same as or remarkably similar to that of Islām? Are there other possible explanations for Sikh monotheism than the one that seems most obvious on the surface?

The point here is that the presuppositions upon which the argument for syncretism is based are simplistic when applied to the complexity of the Indian religious environment to the time of the formation of the Sikh tradition. This raises a question about the accuracy and usefulness of the term syncretism insofar as it applies to Sikhism. But before we can decide whether Sikhism is a predominantly syncretistic religion or whether the term has validity in this context, we shall have to look at the major developments in the rise of the Sikh community and suggest some ways in which these developments may be understood.

The birth and growth of the Sikh community and faith become intelligible in relation to the historical circumstances of the Punjāb in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It would be impossible to make any sense out of Sikhism without understanding this historical context because Gurū Nānak and his successors were preaching reform within both Islām and Hindūism and were offering a corrective for what they regarded as perversions in these two faiths. It is essential then to see what it was they were attempting to correct and why they spoke out at this time in history.

At this period in the Punjāb it was a time of confusion, the breakdown of social and political order, the conflict of armies, religious fanaticism, and ethnic transition. Gurū Nānak wrote about the times :

The age is like a knife. Kings are butchers. Religion hath taken wings and flown. In the dark night of falsehood, I cannot see where the moon of truth is rising . . . Modesty and religion have disappeared because falsehood reigns supreme. The Muslim Mullā and the Hindū Pandit have resigned their duties, the Devil reads marriage vows . . . Praises of murder are sung and people smear themselves with blood instead of saffron.<sup>5</sup>

Let us begin our look at the historical circumstances by examining the ethnic complexity of the Punjāb of Gurū Nānak. The Mughals who invaded India the century before had settled down by this time and were claiming the Punjāb as their home. Rājputs and Jāts had been migrating up from what is now Rājasthān and Gujarāt. These groups were Hindū Kshatriyas and Vaishyas who possessed an independent and defiant character. The Jāts especially brought with them the *panchāyat* tradition and a sense of democracy and communal solidarity. They all were disassociated from the traditional Brāhman hierarchy and felt more at home in the simpler Bhakti devotionalism.

Traditional Brāhmanical Hindūism was under fire from the fanatical expression of Islām which was espoused from time to time under the Mughals. This pressure forced a double reaction within Hindūism itself. One reaction was a retreat into orthodoxy. Hindūism became more insistent upon ritual and the authority of the scriptures. The other reaction was reform. The simplicity of Muslim theology and worship had called the Hindū dependence on archaic ritual and language into question. The sense of equality in Islām judged the perversions to which the caste system had gone. Non-Brāhman Hindūs began seeking an expression that would reach the true religious experience behind the formalism of both Islām and Hindūism. The chaos of the times called for a simple religious faith that could be understood and put to work by the common man. The Bhakti expression of Hindūism insisted on the worship of the one Lord behind his various religious forms, and the equality of all men in their sincere turning to God. This was the basic direction of Hindū reform and it was also the basic direction of the religion of Gurū Nānak. In other words, Gurū Nānak and the beginnings of Sikhism were a part of this reformist response to the perversion and chaos of the times. There were as many expressions of Hindūism within the Bhakti tradition as there were individual saints and Gurūs to expound them. What is important to note here is that Hindūism in its response to the pressure from Islām became more diversified

and complex, to the point that it becomes almost impossible to draw boundaries around it at all.

Before and during the period under reference not all Islām was fanatical in its attempt to exterminate Hindūism. Persian Sūfī mystics who settled in the Punjāb with the Mughals were attempting to make converts to their form of Islām. In doing so they communicated in terms and imagery that would draw a response from Punjābīs. In the process they took on a similar character to much of Bhakti Hindūism. At this time in the Punjāb some of the Sūfīs had more in common with the Bhaktas than they had with the orthodox Islām of the Mughals, and conversely some of the Hindū Bhaktas had more in common with the Punjābī Sūfīs than with orthodox Hindūism. All this goes to point out that we must be careful and cautious in outlining where, if at all, the syncretism was taking place. We have seen that both Hindūism and Islām wore many faces and were not great definable monoliths. The points of positive contact between the two traditions were at the level of popular, lay, pious devotionalism. Their doctrines seemed less important than honesty of worship and philosophy less than concern for one's religious life and moral righteousness. It is out of this milieu of inter-religious contact that Sikhism was born. Even so there was limited contact between Sūfī and Bhakta groups. We cannot automatically assume that, because Gurū Nānak emerges out of an age of spiritual chaos and communal confrontation, he is a blending in equal parts of these two traditions. The picture of Gurū Nānak is far more complicated and subtle. This brings us now to an examination of Gurū Nānak, his relationship to Bhakti and Sūfism, and the distinct stamp he put on the infant Sikh movement.

Gurū Nānak presents the usual problem for the historian of religion. Like that of almost all founders of religions, Gurū Nānak's life has been considerably embellished with the miraculous and the legendary in the *Janamsākhīs* or traditional biographies. Even the earliest account, that of Sewā Dās (c. 1588), is already laden with legendary material. The result is that most of the stories of Gurū Nānak's life are of little use to the historian. However, Gurū Nānak wrote or dictated to a disciple a good number of hymns which are preserved in the *Gurū Granth*. These hymns will be more helpful in trying to get at a reliable picture of Gurū Nānak.

We know that he was born in the Punjāb in 1469. His life can be divided into three fairly distinct periods. The first was one of

inward struggle and religious reflection. As a young man, he was employed by the Muslim ruler, Daulat Khān Lodī. During this period he laid the basis of his later teachings. He resigned from Daulat Khān's service and commenced to travel. He wandered through a good deal of northern India. Legend holds that he went as far west as Meccā and south as Ceylon. He definitely toured the Punjāb as a wandering teacher gathering disciples and converting people to his message. In the last stage of his life he retired to Kartārpur where he set down his essential creed, and before he died he appointed a successor, Gurū Angad, investing him with his own authority and gave him the responsibility of carrying on his work.

Gurū Nānak's message was simple. Religion consisted in the sincere worship of the true God. Gurū Nānak's God was the totality of all things and the source of all things. He is transcendent yet immanent. Gurū Nānak's doctrine was so much devoid of credal exactness that it is impossible to trace precisely its origins. His ideas like those of many of the other medieval Bhaktas are reminiscent of the Vaishnava philosopher, Rāmānuja, whose theistic idealism was the fountain that fed these movements.

Salvation consisted in the repetition of and meditation on the true lord, the Name. In this way the worshipper attains purity and release from *karma*. The Gurū was essential in this process of salvation because he provided the instruction necessary for proper meditation.

The main thrust of Gurū Nānak's message was not theological and credal. Much of his writings in the *Gurū Granth* are denunciations of useless religious formalism. He began by launching an attack on the blind conventionalism of both Hindūism and Islām. He taught that religious men confuse the means of religion with the ends. They establish theological systems and patterns of worship as a means to realize God, but soon the systems and patterns become more important. The rituals and the doctrines become things in themselves. His famous saying "There is no Hindū, there is no Musalmān," which is used as an argument that Gurū Nānak was a syncretist, simply means that the communal identities are secondary to the worship of the true God. Through this saying, he was arguing that both Hindūs and Muslims had fallen away from the true worship. Gurū Nānak realized that the oneness of God behind His various forms was more fundamental to the accidental and secondary religious distinctions. He called men to the true worship. He called them to remember first things first.

Gurū Nānak's polemic was against religious and caste pride, formalism and scripturalism. His writings do not indicate that he intended to destroy Hindūism and Islām. Instead he was calling all men to be genuinely religious. The appointment by Gurū Nānak of a successor was for the purpose of carrying on his message. The formation of a separate community and its defence became the central task of the Gurūs following him, but he does not concern himself with this in any detail.

It has been argued by Toynbee and others that Gurū Nānak called for the abolition of caste under the influence of Islām. There does not appear to be any clear evidence for this. Gurū Nānak preached against caste pride. When caste became a cause for arrogance, it hampered religious quest rather than aided it. Gurū Nānak did, however, offer his message of liberation through meditation on the Name to all regardless of caste. This was not a unique move for him. The point is here, as elsewhere in Gurū Nānak's polemic, that religious pride—not religion—was his enemy. As Indubhūsan Banerjee puts it, "Gurū Nānak had not attempted a destruction of the social order but a reformation to suit the growing needs of the time."<sup>6</sup>

To the Muslim he said :

Make kindness thy mosque, sincerity thy prayer carpet,  
what is just and lawful thy *Qurān* . . . Make right  
conduct thy Kābā, truth thy spiritual guide, good works  
thy creed and thy prayer . . .

And to the Brāhman he said :

Make the remembrance of the Name thy loincloth and  
frontal mark . . .  
Make God's love thy worship, the burning of the love of  
wealth thy incense.  
Look only on the one God and search for no other.<sup>7</sup>

The above-cited quotations are characteristic of much of Gurū Nānak's writing. He attacks religious formalism and prescribes the ethical response of love and reliance on devotion to God as the true religious life.

Gurū Nānak rejected the authority of both the Hindū and Muslim scriptures. This was tied up with his rejection of scripturalism in general. Any religious writing had validity so long as it was transparent to the true God who inspired it. Gurū Nānak's view of the role of the Gurū in

the religious life precluded him from borrowing scriptural material both from Hindū and Islāmic sources. If his chief purpose had been the reconciliation of the two traditions he probably would have selected passages from the *Qurān* and the Shruti and Smriti literature of Hindūism which might have been consistent with the message he was preaching. Instead, Sikhism developed its own scriptural tradition with Gurū Nānak's writings at its centre.

We have seen that Gurū Nānak must be understood neither as a reconciler of traditions nor as a self-conscious initiator of a new tradition; but he should be looked upon as one who provoked men to see the true worship behind the formalism of ritual. As Banerjee points out, "It was his primary concern to provide his contemporaries with a new viewpoint and a detachment which would enable them to understand the relative value of things in matters religious and to distinguish the fundamental from the secondary."<sup>8</sup>

We can best understand the foundation of Sikhism as a protest against conventionalism, and not against Hindūism and Islām as such. It was a protest against pride of worship, scripture and caste. So far we have seen no serious evidence that Gurū Nānak was heavily influenced by Islām or that he attempted to reconcile Hindūism and Islām.

Before we go on to consider the development of the Sikh *Panth*, we should take a closer look at possible influences of Islām on Gurū Nānak's thought.

We have argued so far that the origins of Gurū Nānak's thought and religious approach are a part of the Bhakti renaissance which swept Hindū India from the ninth to seventeenth centuries. However, at the outset of this study we granted that in the broad sense Sikhism can be regarded as a syncretistic religion because it stands geographically and historically in the running together of the rivers of Hindūism and Islām. We are trying to dispel the simplistic notion that Sikhism is a conscious syncretism or that it is primarily an attempt to reconcile Hindūism and Islām. This brings us to the question of how and where Islām feeds into the development of Gurū Nānak's thought and the Sikhism of the Gurūs.

The only scholarly study on this issue has been done by W. H. McLeod.<sup>9</sup> He argues that Gurū Nānak's religion and that of Sikhism as a whole "is firmly embedded in the Sant tradition of northern India, in the beliefs of the so-called *Nirguna Sampradāya*."<sup>10</sup> The categories of thought and doctrines he employs are those of the Sants. Unfortunately no



other information is available on who the Sants are, except that they are, wandering pious devotees, another of the many Bhakta groups which flourished during this period. McLeod goes on to argue that, although there are certain Muslim influences which are worth noting, those influences were mediated through the Sants. This means that such syncretism as there was with Islām, specifically Punjābī Sūfism, had already gone on before Gurū Nānak's appearance. Gurū Nānak is the recipient of an already syncretistic tradition in which Muslim influence had already become so interwoven into the fabric of Hindū Bhakta that it was impossible to identify it any longer as Muslim. This means that any Muslim influence that may be found will already have been channelled through mixed sources.

McLeod argues that as Gurū Nānak rejected the conventionalism of Islām it would not be fruitful to search for Muslim influences there, but rather in Sūfism and specifically in Punjābī Sūfism which itself had undergone some Hindūization in the preceding centuries. Gurū Nānak probably met and talked with Punjābī Sūfis. The argument for direct influence from Punjābī Sūfism is harder to document in Gurū Nānak's thought than the argument of influence mediated through the Sant tradition. McLeod maintains that the two Sūfī writings included in the *Gurū Granth* already demonstrate the stamp of Sant influence and most likely they may have been in their possession before they were passed on to Gurū Arjun for inclusion in the *Gurū Granth*. So, then, even what appears to be clearly syncretism in the inclusion of Muslim writings in the *Gurū Granth* is a case of Punjābī Islāmic mysticism already baptized into Hindū mysticism before it was passed along through Gurū Nānak into the Sikh tradition.

There are references in the Janamsākhīs to encounters between Gurū Nānak and Sūfis. But, as we have already said, these accounts are not historically reliable enough to be of much use to the scholar. Instead, we shall follow McLeod's lead and examine Gurū Nānak's language, key concepts, and literary style to see where any affinities with Islām might lie. McLeod points to an isolated *slok* which is obviously addressed to Sūfis because it uses language appropriate to that audience.<sup>11</sup> But because it is an exceptional *slok*, it argues against any significant encounter between Gurū Nānak and the Sūfis. On the other hand, because we do not find any passages which are of a polemical character against the Sūfis, it is safe to assume that he had no great quarrel with them. It seems most reasonable to assume that while he had no argument with

them because their beliefs were sufficiently similar to his own, his direct contact with them was limited to an occasional conversation such as the one recorded in the *Gurū Granth*.

We can push this question farther and ask about the apparent similarities between Sūfism and Gurū Nānak. The emphasis on the oneness of God, revelation in creation, God's transcendence yet immanence, and the rejection of needless asceticism can all be found both in Sūfism and Gurū Nānak. This similarity has persuaded some scholars to think that Gurū Nānak got these ideas from the Sūfīs. McLeod points out, in response to this, that the Sūfī terminology for these ideas is conspicuously absent in Gurū Nānak.<sup>12</sup> Whenever a Sūfī concept seems to be obvious in Gurū Nānak, the language expressing the concept is not Sūfī. "In contrast to this relative absence of Sūfī terms we find a wealth of Sant terminology and imagery derived from Hindū sources. Almost all of his basic terminology is of native Indian derivation."<sup>13</sup> The force of McLeod's argument is that, although there are affinities with Sūfism in Gurū Nānak's thought, the sources of his thought can be explained more adequately from Hindū Sant tradition. Since we have already rejected Gurū Nānak's closer ties with Islāmic tradition, it is a more convincing argument to see even the Sūfī influences themselves mediated back through Bhakti sources into Gurū Nānak's thought. This means that such syncretism as we may find in Gurū Nānak is the result of a process of interpenetration which had already been going on before his time in the particular Bhakti tradition of the Sants.

Another reason for arguing against direct Sūfī influence is that some of Gurū Nānak's key concepts are in conflict with Sūfism. The doctrines of *karma* and transmigration of soul are the most notable examples. Even the argument Toynbee articulates that Gurū Nānak got his monotheism from Islām cannot be sustained. The notion of the supremacy of one God behind all religious forms is expressed in the Bhakti tradition long before Gurū Nānak. Had Gurū Nānak drawn his monotheism from Sūfism we would expect to find Sūfī terminology. The fact is that we do not find such terminology. This does not mean that Sūfism did not have some influence on Bhakti thought; it probably did. However, Gurū Nānak's monotheism can be explained in terms of its Bhakti expression using local terminology and imagery. Sūfism probably had some influence on Gurū Nānak's predecessors but it can hardly be shown that it provides a source for Gurū Nānak's own

position.

Even Gurū Nānak's doctrine of the *hukam*<sup>14</sup> shows this process of individualization. The word *hukam* refers to the Sūfī concept of the 'divine will,' a personalized notion of Allāh's activity in the universe. To Gurū Nānak, the *hukam* is the divine principle of order by which the universe is maintained. It corresponds closely to the Sanskrit concept of the *rita*. What for Islām is a personalized direct involvement of God in the universe becomes for Gurū Nānak an abstract principle of order. The term is clearly drawn from Sūfī sources but the spirit of the term is different.

To summarize this investigation of Islāmic influences, we have maintained that some influence from Punjābī Sūfism can be detected in Gurū Nānak's thought. This influence had already been absorbed into the Bhakti Sant tradition. Whatever direct influence there was from Sūfism is minimal. As McLeod states, "...no fundamental components of Nānak's thought can be traced with assurance to an Islāmic source. Gurū Nānak's principal inheritance from the religious background of the period was unquestionably that of the Sant tradition and evidence of other independent influences is relatively slight. We must acknowledge that the antecedents of the Sant beliefs are by no means wholly clear and that within the area of obscurity there may be important features which derived primarily from Sūfī sources."<sup>15</sup> We are drawn to the conclusion that one cannot justify the statement that Gurū Nānak drew his idea of monotheism or any other central beliefs, language or imagery directly from Islāmic sources. The process of syncretism between Hindūism and Islām had already been going on for some time before Gurū Nānak. He was an heir to this process and emerges out of a tradition which had already confronted and assimilated some Islāmic influence. Consequently, Gurū Nānak himself is not the syncretizing element in the development of Sikhism but comes out of an age when exchange and interpenetration had been going on for at least three centuries before him. In the larger sense, Gurū Nānak and the Sikh tradition can be categorized as a syncretism. But then much of northern Indian Bhakti Hindūism must also be so categorized. If this is done, the word loses its usefulness. Had the particular events that led to the formation of the Sikh community not occurred and had Sikhism been reabsorbed into Bhakti Hindūism, the whole issue of syncretism probably would never have come up. Because Sikhism maintains an identity separate from Hindūism and Islām, it must be categorized by scholars into some

convenient pigeonhole. It would be more accurate to categorize the tradition as a revelation to which circumstances gave a separate and unique identity apart from Hindūism and Islām. Its dependence on Islām is so slight and secondary that to call Sikhism a case of syncretism is more misleading than it is helpful.

After Gurū Nānak, the Sikh community began to take on a definite shape. After Gurū Arjun's martyrdom, it became openly militaristic. This sudden shift from Gurū Nānak's quietism to Gurū Hargobind's praise of the sword has puzzled Westerners. The transition at first appears abrupt. Actually from Gurū Amar Dās on the Sikh community became gradually more secular and concerned with its preservation and growth. Sikhism developed institutions of its own. The development of the community and its particular institutions can be adequately understood only in terms of its response to Mughal persecutions. The institutional developments show Sikhism's greatest originality and uniqueness. These institutions were largely demanded by the events of the time and show a marked departure from Sikhism's roots in the Sant Bhakti tradition.

The simplicity of Gurū Nānak's message and his rejection of conventionalism and asceticism gave Sikhism a character of plasticity in the formative years, and the community was free to move as circumstances required. When Gurū Nānak passed the office of Gurū on to Angad, he made the most momentous move for the growth of Sikhism. His doctrine of the Gurū made it an eternal office, necessary for liberation. The gurūship secured religious authority for the Sikhs outside Hindū and Islāmic sources of authority. When Gurū Arjun compiled the writings of the first five Gurūs into the *Ādi Granth*, he gave the community its own scriptural tradition. The use of the vernacular in these writings brought a separate identity to Sikhism and helped establish a new literary tradition outside Sanskrit. All these factors helped to protect Sikhism from becoming reabsorbed back into Hindūism.

Yet the most effective means of establishing the Sikh tradition as a separate religion and community came with the persecution from the Mughals. After the death of Akbar and the moratorium on religious persecution, Jahāngīr reasserted the supremacy of Islām. He felt that this new Punjābī religious group was a threat to Islāmic dominance and succeeded in having Gurū Arjun executed.

By this time large groups of Jāts and Rājput̄s had been won to Sikhism. To it they brought their martial tradition and mentality. The

simplicity of Gurū Nānak's religion left room for the community to respond to the martyrdom of their Gurū as they felt necessary. The response was defensive and militaristic. Gurū Arjun's successor, Gurū Hargobind, built up a defensive force to protect them. Increased pressure came from Jahāngir and after him from Aurangzeb. The Sikhs realized that the Emperor's policy threatened their extinction. Their defensive reaction became offensive and, by the time of Gurū Gobind Singh's leadership, the Sikhs had taken on a definite political character.

Khushwant Singh<sup>16</sup> argues that this development culminating in the formation of the Khālsā can be best understood as an expression of an infant Punjābī nationalism. He posits an intriguing argument. The term, "nationalism," may not be the best one because of the connotations of the word in reference to the rise of the modern nation states in the West and in Asia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A more adequate explanation can be found by looking upon the response to persecution and the formation of the Khālsā as an attempt to protect the young community on the one hand and to establish its distinct identity on the other. The Sikhs did not develop an ideology that can be described as "nationalistic," but they were extremely concerned about forging a new brotherhood of believers who could survive the pressures of the time successfully and continue to include new converts to the "true faith" given by the Gurūs. Many of the particular military characteristics which the community took on were the results of the types of people who became Sikhs and of the kind of values they brought with them into the new brotherhood.

The formation of the Khālsā, or militant brotherhood of believers, under Gurū Gobind Singh finally reconciled the community to a secular way of life. The more ascetically inclined had already formed a group called Udāsis, and split off. The dominant secular wing had formed an ecclesiastical organization of religious administrators, *manjīs*, to oversee the propagation of the faith into new areas. It had established free kitchens, *langars*, where worshippers could eat a simple meal together regardless of caste. Finally, it had set up a system of collection of revenue from the community to finance the construction of temples, *gurdwārās*, and to outfit the army that was needed to defend the community. The Sikhs exercised considerable organizational talent which proved to be fruitful during the days of persecution.

It is not necessary for our study to go into detail about the organization of the Khālsā. The foregoing discussion is to point out that Sikhism

in a defensive response to Muslim persecution sought its own identity as a religious and political community distinct both from Hindūism and Islām. Its organizational structure is more secular than it is patterned after the organizations of the Bhakti or Sūfī cults. It was a case of making use of the organizational structures that were most suitable to the needs of the community.

When Gurū Arjun compiled the *Ādi Granth*, he included in it some writings from Bhaktas and Sūfī saints who preceded or were contemporary with Gurū Nānak. On this basis it has been argued that he was trying to reconcile Hindūism and Islām and to bring the authority of these traditions into Sikhism. This argument is not convincing. These Bhakti and Sūfī writings were included because they were in basic agreement with Gurū Nānak. If anything, the formation of the *Ādi Granth* itself was an argument that Gurū Arjun was trying to fix the Sikh identity away from these two traditions. Had Gurū Arjun wanted to reconcile them, he would have included portions of the *Bhagavad Gītā* or the Shruti or Smṛiti scriptures and the *Qurān* and the more established Persian Sūfīs.

An analysis of the names of those who became converts reveals that the great majority of them were Hindūs. Indubhūsan Banerjee points out that within the Sikh community the Muslim converts formed a kind of separate group. The baptism by the sword, the ceremony of initiation into the Khālsā, is a creation of the circumstances that led to the founding of the Khālsā itself. In summary we have seen the important developments in the formation of the Sikh community: the institutionalization of the gurūship, the ecclesiastical organization, the establishment of the *Gurū Granth*, the militaristic defensive response to the Muslims, and the ceremonies of the Sikhs can be best understood as the results of the community under external pressure to unite and grow or die. They chose to grow. Their particular way of growing was dictated by the circumstances. Their energy was consumed with survival. There is no evidence to prove that they went out of their way to build a world faith, or even to make peace between the Hindūs and Muslims. As we have noted already, they alienated both the Brāhman hierarchy and the Muslim Empire, and instead they created a distinct religion and community of their own. For a scholar to do justice to the Sikh tradition, it is imperative that he recognizes the unique circumstances in the development of its identity as a genuinely new and original religious expression.

In this paper we have tried to find out whether the widely held

assumption of Sikhism as a syncretistic religion can stand up against the evidence the tradition offers. Our search has led us to consider seriously the history of the times in which Gurū Nānak lived and spoke as well as the forces which led to the formation and growth of the community. We have found that Gurū Nānak did not see himself, nor did his community see him, as a reconciler and synthesizer of Hindūism and Islām. He was more or less the opposite. He was a purifier of the popular religious expressions of both traditions. McLeod has shown that Gurū Nānak came out of a Bhakti tradition which had previously absorbed and Hindūized some elements from Punjābī Sūfi mysticism. It is more accurate to see Gurū Nānak and the formation of Sikhism as an attempt at simplification of religious worship and the concentration on the Name of the one God. The times were ripe for such an attempt.

We have examined the presuppositions which syncretism implies as it applies to Sikhism and found that they oversimplify and distort the religious complexion of the age and the subtlety and originality of Gurū Nānak's own writings. Consequently, to classify Sikhism as a syncretistic religion will be a distortion. This will mean lack of appreciation of the particular factors in its development which were original to it and were the result of historical circumstances. Thus we have a better grasp of Sikhism's complexities and are led to understand it in its own terms. This is a more accurate, and a scholarly kind of, understanding, even though it makes the job more complicated.

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## INCIDENT AT NĀBHĀ

BARBARA N. RAMUSACK

Immediately after the Congress at Delhī in the autumn of 1923  
I had a strange and unexpected adventure.<sup>1</sup>

With this one-sentence paragraph Jawāharlāl Nehrū began a description of his visit to and subsequent arrest and trial in the Punjāb state of Nābhā during the agitation over the abdication of its princely ruler, Mahārājā Ripudaman Singh. Though Nehrū treated his experiences as an alarming but politically insignificant initiation into Indian state politics, the abdication of Nābhā and concomitant events came to have major repercussions on political developments within the Sikh community and on the evolution of British policies within the Punjāb. This incident at Nābhā originated in a senseless but bitter personal feud between Ripudaman Singh and his neighbour, Mahārājā Bhupinder Singh of Patiālā. It assumed wider ramifications when each rival sought support for his respective position from such varied groups as the British Government, Sikh organizations like the newly formed Shiromanī Gurdwārā Parbandhak Committee (the Central Gurdwārā Management Committee which will hereafter be referred to as the S.G.P.C.) and the Akālī Dal, the Indian National Congress and assorted Indian nationalist and Sikh religious leaders. As these new forces entered the dispute, the area of controversy was broadened and issues of political significance were raised.

This analysis of the Nābhā episode will first reconstruct the rivalry between the two Indian autocrats, the immediate circumstances surrounding the abdication and the subsequent agitation protesting against the abdication. In order to correct the biases of both Akālī Dal and Government sources, careful attention will be paid to the sequence of events leading to the abdication, the stages of Akālī Dal and S.G.P.C. involvement in the dispute and the evaluation of official policies for handling the disturbances. Then an assessment will be made of the implications of this controversy for Sikh political developments, the area in which this incident had its greatest impact. Finally, an effort will be

made to point out how this specific episode illustrates certain aspects of what was happening concurrently in the spheres of nationalist politics in general, British policy towards nationalist agitations and relations between the British Government and the Indian states which occupied two-fifths of the Indian subcontinent.

On July 7, 1923, Colonel A. B. Minchin, the Agent to the Governor-General for the Punjab States, received a most extraordinary letter from Mahārājā Ripudaman Singh of Nābhā. In this letter Nābhā agreed to sever all connection with the administration of his state under certain conditions.<sup>2</sup> The most immediate reason for his decision was his precarious position in a dispute with the Mahārājā of Patialā.

On the surface these two rivals, both tracing their ancestry along with Jind state to Phūl, a Sikh leader of the eighteenth century, seemed to have much in common. Known collectively as the Phūlkiān states, the rulers of Nābhā and Jind claimed descent from Phūl's eldest son while the ruler of Patialā claimed descent from an able younger son. Patialā, however, was the largest Phūlkiān state by far, in terms of territory, population and revenue and was acclaimed as the premier Sikh state in India.<sup>3</sup> Despite their common religious heritage and dynastic ties, there were sources of tension among the Phūlkiān states. Nābhā and Patialā ruled over intertwined territories with numerous instances of the territory of one state surrounding the territory of the other state; this situation provided abundant fuel for border disputes and jurisdictional controversies. Then too, both princes had succeeded to power at about the same time and shared the hypersensitivity on matters of *izzat* or honour and status common to most Indian princes. At the outset of their careers Nābhā seemed to have an advantageous position in the area of prestige because of his appointment to the Viceroy's Legislative Council in 1906 and Patialā's escapades while attending Aitchison College in Lāhore.<sup>4</sup>

From the time Patialā acceded to power in 1909 and Nābhā in 1911, there was strife between these two Sikh princes, strife too long-standing and bitter to be concealed by later Akālī efforts to whitewash it. As early as 1912, Edwin Montagu, then Undersecretary of State for India, commented on the strained relations between them.<sup>5</sup> Each prince was ambitious, arrogant, energetic, and jealous. Their rivalry apparently began around 1912, continued during the war, and sharpened in the post-war years.<sup>6</sup> Since Nābhā was the underdog in rank and resources, he appears to have resorted to more desperate measures than Patialā did to discredit his rival. By 1921 Nābhā had gone beyond ceremonial insults

to attacks on Patiālā's sovereignty. Apart from the usual boundary disputes, the Mahārājā of Patiālā had several complaints about the irregular arrest, trial, and conviction of Patiālā police officers by the Nābhā courts and about the abduction of Patiālā girls for the *zenānā* or harem of the Mahārājā of Nābhā.

There had been informal efforts to reconcile these two rulers at various intervals. One notable example occurred in August, 1917, when Bhāi Arjan Singh of Bāgariān, the traditional religious counsellor of the Phūlkīān house, effected a formal reconciliation of Patiālā and Nābhā.<sup>7</sup> However, this as well as other such reconciliations usually proved to be temporary lulls. As their rivalry intensified, Ripudaman Singh himself, in December, 1921, sent a deputation to Patiālā to arrange for a reconciliatory meeting. Apparently Nābhā had begun to fear that as Patiālā grew in popularity with the British Government, Patiālā might well look to the British for support in their dispute. In his reply to Nābhā's deputation, Patiālā stated that his adversary must agree initially to four conditions before they could proceed further towards a settlement. First, Nābhā must refrain from any future association with political propaganda hostile to the British Government. Second, he must honourably acquit three members of the Patiālā Police Force who had been imprisoned in Nābhā. Third, he should surrender other accused Patiālā subjects and then Patiālā would reciprocate with the release of Nābhā subjects detained in Patiālā. Fourth, Nābhā must return the Patiālā girls whom he had abducted and debauched. Patiālā's first stipulation indicated that he must have decided that it would be profitable to act as a sympathetic friend of the Government in order to strengthen the bonds of their relationship. Since Patiālā seemed to demand total surrender, Nābhā rejected these conditions and Patiālā proceeded to break off all contacts between the two states.<sup>8</sup>

On his side Ripudaman Singh had been careful to cultivate rapport with the more radical members of the Sikh community who were gradually assuming positions of power within Punjāb politics. The growth of political consciousness among the Sikhs had lagged behind such developments among the Hindūs and Muslims who formed the two dominant religious groups in the Punjāb. Early Sikh organizations such as the Singh Sabhās founded in the eighteen seventies and the Sikh Educational Conference established in the early nineteen hundreds concentrated on religious and social reform within the Sikh community. It was only during the First World War that various Sikh leaders began to launch

political agitations designed to secure a greater portion of the political spoils available within the British imperial system. Concurrent with constitutional petitions for separate electorates which had already been conceded to the Muslims in 1909, some Sikhs participated in the abortive Ghadar conspiracy which sought to overthrow the British Indian Empire with German aid.

In the upheaval of the postwar era, certain Sikh groups directed their attention to reforming the administration and religious and secular practices permitted in their gurdwārās or shrines. During the two centuries after the death of Gurū Gobind Singh, the tenth and last Sikh Gurū, the control of many gurdwārās had passed into the hands of Hindū or unorthodox Udāsī Sikh mahants or managers who allowed practices within the gurdwārās which scandalized orthodox Sikhs, who increasingly came to emphasize their distinctness from other religions, especially Hindūism. After scattered takeovers of a few gurdwārās, some Sikhs formed the S.G.P.C. in 1920 to make a more vigorous and direct attempt to gain control of the gurdwārās and to effect the desired changes. The S.G.P.C. was to be assisted in its work by the Akālī Dal or the Army of the Immortals who were more radical Sikhs organized into a political party.

Since the British Government protected the legal rights of the mahants, who were sometimes Government appointees, the S.G.P.C. and the Akālī Dal, pursuing increasingly forcible methods to evict the mahants, came into frequent conflict with the Government. The most prominent incidents of strife between the Akālīs and the mahants occurred at Tarn Tāran, Nankānā Sāhib, the Golden Temple at Amritsar and Gurū-kā-Bāgh. In 1922 the Punjāb Government passed a Gurdwārā Bill allowing more popular Sikh participation in the management of the gurdwārās but its terms did not satisfy the S.G.P.C. who rendered the Act a dead letter by refusing to cooperate. By 1923 the Government and the S.G.P.C. had reached a stalemate with neither side in a mood to compromise.<sup>9</sup> Nābhā had been careful to speak in favour of the S.G.P.C. and was reputed to have donated large sums of money to their treasury.

During 1922 the vernacular press in the Punjāb devoted larger amounts of space to the Patiālā-Nābhā dispute. This interest was partly due to funds supplied by both princes to certain newspapers and partly because of the growing seriousness of the dispute. Some papers accused Dayā Kishan Kaul, Patiālā's Prime Minister and a Kashmīrī Brāhmin, of being the instigator of the quarrel.<sup>10</sup> Though Kaul was a convenient non-Sikh

scapegoat for Akālī propaganda, this allegation is disproved by the evidence that the rivalry existed long before Kaul came to Patiālā in 1916.<sup>11</sup> Some papers just generally deplored the conflict between the two Sikh rulers while other papers called upon the S.G.P.C. to reconcile them.<sup>12</sup>

Seeing the continuing dispute as an attack on his sovereignty and status and probably certain of Government support, Patiālā got Nābhā to agree to refer their differences to the Government of India for settlement. At first Nābhā employed Sir Alī Imām, a prominent Bihārī lawyer and moderate Muslim politician, and his brother Syed Hassan Imām as counsel. Alī Imām proposed an informal settlement of the feud to prevent Government intervention but Nābhā procrastinated since he thought Imām's proposals entailed unbearable sacrifices of prestige and status.<sup>13</sup> With both sides adamant, the Government of India moved, at the end of 1922 to appoint Mr Justice Stuart of the Allāhābād High Court to conduct a judicial inquiry into the dispute and the inquiry was held in Ambālā from January 3, 1923 to May 3, 1923.

Concurrent with this formal inquiry, there were further informal efforts to settle the dispute. At the end of January Nābhā sent a personal letter to Patiālā requesting a meeting at which they might settle their differences. Unfortunately, Patiālā considered this letter to be more of an insult than an apology and rejected this overture.<sup>14</sup> A more significant effort at reconciliation was made by the S.G.P.C. in May, 1923. A deputation from the S.G.P.C. went to Patiālā on May 2, and discussed the possibility of a reconciliation. Patiālā expressed his readiness for a settlement and outlined his terms. Then the deputation proceeded to Nābhā where the Mahārājā refused on three separate occasions to meet with them. After the deputation had talked with Narsingha Rāo, Nābhā's Prime Minister, they requested only authorization from Nābhā to continue their peace mission. Nābhā refused even this gesture. Though this effort by the S.G.P.C. was reported both in the *Akālī-te-Pardesī* of Amritsar and *The Tribune* of Lāhore, it is never mentioned in later Akālī propaganda.<sup>15</sup>

During April and May Narsingha Rāo began to submit proposals to the Government which would allow Nābhā to temporarily suspend his control over the administration of his state. The reason given as the basis for these requests was to allow Nābhā to recover his health which was allegedly undermined by the tensions created by the feud and the Government inquiry.<sup>16</sup> At the same time Mr Justice Stuart was writing

his report which reached the Viceroy, Lord Reading, sometime during the first week of June. It was generally known that the report found most of Patiālā's charges to be true in substance and was highly critical of the prevailing administrative practices in Nābhā state.

On June 5, Nābhā went to Kasaulī to discuss his dilemma with Minchin. According to Minchin's version of their conversation, Nābhā said that he wanted a settlement of his dispute with Patiālā and was anxious to have Minchin's advice in this matter. At this time Minchin suggested or enjoined the Mahārājā to voluntarily sever all his connections with the administration of his state. Minchin argued then and at later conversations that voluntary action would avoid harsher treatment which would result if there were a formal inquiry into the administration of the state.<sup>17</sup> A few days later Nābhā tentatively agreed to sever all connections with his state on certain conditions.<sup>18</sup>

The remainder of June was spent in negotiations between Nābhā and the Government of India and between Reading and Lord Peel, the Secretary of State for India, over the exact conditions under which Nābhā would be allowed to voluntarily abdicate. At first, Peel questioned the policy of the Government of India in permitting Nābhā to abdicate without a thorough investigation of the highly irregular conditions described in Stuart's report.<sup>19</sup> Once Peel agreed to Simlā's policy for reasons of expediency, he added further conditions to the list.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile Nābhā had begun to reconsider his initial decision.

At the beginning of July, Simlā received word that some extremist Akālīs had met with Nābhā and, according to Government sources, these Akālīs promised to support Nābhā if he refused to abdicate.<sup>21</sup> When Patiālā sources shortly thereafter claimed that Nābhā had begun to strip his palace of his wealth, the Government gave an ultimatum to Nābhā that he would be suspended if he did not voluntarily abdicate by July 6. In case of suspension, there would be a full inquiry into Nābhā's administration of his state. If he was found guilty of maladministration, then he would be formally deposed under terms dictated by the Government.<sup>22</sup>

Now a certain Mr O'Grady entered the negotiations. O'Grady was a former postal employee of the British Indian Government and a personal friend of the Mahārājā of Nābhā. On July 6, O'Grady spent the whole day talking with Nābhā in an effort to persuade him to abdicate for his own good. Finally Nābhā signed a letter agreeing to abdicate voluntarily on the terms proposed by the Government.

O'Grady then drove off to personally deliver the letter to Minchin. Shortly after O'Grady left, the Mahārājā changed his mind and sent an official in hot pursuit of him. When the official reached him, O'Grady refused to give up the letter and delivered it to Minchin.<sup>23</sup>

On July 7, the Government of India formally recorded its conclusions based on the report of Mr Justice Stuart. From the evidence recorded by Stuart, the Government concluded that there had been "a deliberate perversion, by highly placed officials in the State [Nābhā], of the whole machinery for the administration of justice, for the purpose of damaging Patiālā." They further argued that "... it is inconceivable that the perversion of justice could have been reduced to a system of offence against Patiālā, without the Mahārājā's full general approval and active countenance."<sup>24</sup> While the Government of India strongly condemned the state of affairs in Nābhā revealed by the inquiry, they agreed to accept the voluntary abdication of Nābhā on the following conditions :

1. The Government of India would take over the administration and the Mahārājā would refrain from all interference in state affairs.
2. The Mahārājā would formally abdicate when his son came of age.
3. The Mahārājā would reside outside the state in Dehrā Dūn and Mussoorie.
4. The Mahārājā would visit Nābhā only for religious purposes and then with the prior permission of the Government.
5. The Mahārājā could visit the Punjāb, Europe or America only with the prior permission of the Government.
6. The Government would be responsible for the education of the heir-apparent.
7. The Patiālā Darbār would receive a sum not over 50 lakhs as compensation and the Mahārājā will assist in the sale of certain securities and personal property to raise this sum.
8. Nābhā would remain subject to the obligations of loyalty to the Crown imposed by the Sanad of 1860.
9. Nābhā would retain his salute and titles and would receive an allowance of 3 lakhs of rupees annually for life.
10. If Nābhā defaulted on any part of the agreement, the Government would be free to annul or modify any of the above conditions.<sup>25</sup>

Because of their reluctance to allow their relations with the Indian states to become a subject open to comment and criticism, the Government did not publish Stuart's report. In their press communique announcing the abdication of Nābhā, they merely stated that they had evidence of a definite perversion of justice within the Nābhā administration and had agreed to accept Nābhā's voluntary abdication under the above conditions. The unintended effect of this policy of silence was to enable interested parties to question the basis for the Mahārājā's abdication in the following weeks.

Since J. Wilson-Johnston, an Indian Civil Service officer who had been appointed administrator of Nābhā, was on home leave, C.M.G. Ogilvie, another I.C.S. officer with experience in the Punjāb, was to serve as officiating administrator until Wilson-Johnston returned to India. So on July 8, 1923, Minchin and Ogilvie proceeded to Nābhā with armoured cars, took over the administration of the state and removed the Mahārājā to Dehrā Dūn. The initial response of the Punjāb press to Nābhā's abdication was twofold : stormy protest against the Government interference in Nābhā affairs and extravagant glorification of the Mahārājā of Nābhā as a nationalist and a Sikh leader. They further charged that the Patiālā-Nābhā dispute and the report by Stuart were mere pretexts which the Government utilized to pressure Nābhā to abdicate in order to remove a political threat.<sup>26</sup>

It was widely known that Nābhā's relations with the Government were strained and after the abdication the Punjāb press generally attributed this estrangement to Ripudaman Singh's alleged defiance of the Government. The first confrontation was said to have occurred when the young prince, serving on the Viceroy's Legislative Council from 1906 to 1908, supported the positions advanced by nationalist members such as G. K. Gokhale, R. B. Ghose, and M. M. Mālavīya rather than the official resolutions.<sup>27</sup> A few years later when he succeeded his father in 1911, Ripudaman Singh refused to allow certain rituals at his installation *darbār* since he considered them to be an encroachment on his status as a ruler. This disagreement over ceremonies was portrayed as a major attack on an aristocratic friend of the Indian people by a despotic Government. Unfortunately for the historian, the Punjāb press remained astutely vague when discussing Nābhā's concern for his fellow Indians. Finally Nābhā's alleged sympathies with the Akālī and nationalist movements were seen as a third source of conflict.<sup>28</sup> While the Government was alienated from Nābhā mainly over the ceremonial



issue, it had sought on various occasions through both officials and princely intermediaries to improve relations with the recalcitrant ruler but with little success.<sup>29</sup>

Immediately after Nābhā's abdication was made public, the S.G.P.C. met to consider their response. Any intervention by the S.G.P.C. in the political affairs of Nābhā would be a signal departure from their earlier programme of gurdwārā reform and so they proceeded cautiously. In their initial communique on Nābhā, the S.G.P.C. labelled the Government intervention in Nābhā as an attack on a major section of the Sikh community, namely the Phūlkīān states. Then they supported an active campaign in the press and on the platform calling for the restoration of the Mahārājā. Still, the S.G.P.C. did not commit the *Panth* or the Sikh community which it claimed to represent to any definite course of action. Further discussion of Nābhā affairs was deferred until after the general elections of the S.G.P.C. which were scheduled for the end of July.<sup>30</sup> According to Punjāb Criminal Investigation Department sources, the forthcoming elections would probably increase the extremists on the S.G.P.C. and it was likely that the new S.G.P.C. would adopt a more intransigent policy than the outgoing group would have done.<sup>31</sup>

The immediate reaction of C.M.G. Ogilvie and Minchin to this propaganda campaign in support of Nābhā was to urge Patiālā to organize a counterpropaganda campaign in support of the Government.<sup>32</sup> It must be made clear that Patiālā needed little persuasion to act for already, on July 6, he had forwarded an informal note to the Government asking that strong measures be taken against Nābhā who had inflicted so much misery on his brother prince and his brother's subjects.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, Patiālā was quick to issue a press communique in which he contradicted statements that he opposed the abdication of Nābhā and asserted that he thought voluntary abdication was a wise step since it precluded more drastic consequences.<sup>34</sup> Once the premier Sikh prince of the Punjāb openly approved of Nābhā's abdication, a united Sikh front on the matter was no longer possible.

Then Dayā Kishan Kaul, Patiālā's much-criticized Prime Minister, began to co-ordinate an extensive propaganda campaign. First, members of the S.G.P.C. under the influence of Patiālā were to be persuaded to work against the Nābhā supporters at the S.G.P.C. meetings. Second, Sikh citizens of Nābhā were to be encouraged to hold public meetings of protest against the oppression exercised by the Mahārājā of Nābhā and to send public letters to the S.G.P.C. relating the terror prevalent

under the rule of the former Mahārājā. Third, articles supporting Patialā and the British Government were to be supplied to the press by Patialā authorities.<sup>35</sup>

A new phase of the agitation occurred when the S.G.P.C. proclaimed July 29 as a day of prayer for the Mahārājā in preparation for future struggles.<sup>36</sup> Accordingly, the Government of India began to plan its strategy against an intensified agitation. On July 26, Sir Malcolm Hailey, the Home Member of the Government of India, held a conference with the Mahārājā of Patialā, Minchin, Kaul, Dr Dhīngrā, the Chief Minister of Jīnd, and G. D. Ogilvie, the officiating Political Secretary of the Government of India, in order to evolve joint measures which would neutralize such an agitation. To remove one potential basis for protest, Patialā urged that the British administrator be replaced by a Council of Regency customarily appointed in the Phūlkīān states. The practice was that each Phūlkīān state appointed one member to a Council of Regency whenever such a Council was established in any Phūlkīān state. Nābhā had specifically requested a British administrator apparently to prevent any intervention by Patialā in Nābhā affairs. While the Government of India realized that Patialā probably had his own interests to the forefront when he made this proposal, they decided that such a Council might serve certain political purposes to their advantage. Therefore, the Government of India issued a communique at the beginning of August stating that a Council of Regency would replace the British administrator as soon as possible.<sup>37</sup>

Government participants at the conference also laid down a policy to deal with possible Akālī *jathās* or bands of volunteers sent to Nābhā by the S.G.P.C. in an effort to force the restoration of the Mahārājā of Nābhā. Recalling their experience at Gurū-kā-Bāgh, they resolved not to prevent the *jathās* from leaving British India since such bands would be easier to handle in Nābhā territory. If the *jathās* adopted passive tactics, they would not be disturbed in the hope that they would soon tire of such methods, whereas if the volunteers turned to violence, they could be arrested. Only the leaders were to be arrested, while the followers were to be merely expelled from the state in order to avoid the logistic problems connected with large numbers of prisoners. While there was to be no firing in case of passive resistance, firing would be considered legitimate in case of active resistance once those involved were warned of the consequences of their continued active resistance. C. M. G. Ogilvie, the man on the spot, was to be advised that the

Government would support him fully and sympathetically in any reasonable action he would pursue.<sup>38</sup>

At the end of July general elections of the S.G.P.C. were held. The extremists did increase their representation on the S.G.P.C.; and the S.G.P.C. adopted a more belligerent tone. On August 2, the S.G.P.C. sent a telegram to Lord Reading claiming that threats had been made to get Nābhā to relinquish his *gaddī* and therefore demanding an independent inquiry into his abdication.<sup>39</sup> Meanwhile the Government of India decided to pursue a policy of silence towards the S.G.P.C. demands, reasoning that any reply would imply a recognition of the legitimacy of the S.G.P.C. by the Government. At a meeting on August 6 in Amritsar, the Executive Committee of the S.G.P.C. elected a Working Committee which was largely composed of extremists to coordinate the Nābhā agitation.<sup>40</sup>

On August 24, C. M. G. Ogilvie hastily advised Colonel Minchin that the Akālīs were holding a *dīwān* or meeting protesting the abdication at Jaito, a Nābhā village close to British Punjab territory and distant from the capital city of Nābhā. Issuing orders prohibiting *dīwāns* or any political meetings in Nābhā state, Ogilvie then posted a police cordon around the Gangsar Gurdwārā at Jaito where a *dīwān* was being held. By preventing any further recruits from joining the *dīwān* or any supplies being sent in to the members of the *dīwān*, he hoped to bring it to an end without the use of force.<sup>41</sup> A few days later the problem seemed to be spreading as Ogilvie complained to Minchin that Akālīs from Patialā and Faridkot were holding *dīwāns* within their respective territories close to the Nābhā border and the hard pressed administrator requested that the states be induced to take a hard line against Akālī agitation within their borders.<sup>42</sup>

September was the crucial month in the development of the agitation over the abdication of Nābhā. On September 4, the Executive Committee of the S.G.P.C. held an ultra-secret meeting in Amritsar at which it was decided to launch a *morchā* or a battlefront on the Nābhā issue. They also designated September 9 as Nābhā Day throughout India and called for prayers, processions, and meetings of protest against the abdication.<sup>43</sup> Wilson-Johnston had assumed charge of the post of administrator at Nābhā on September 3 and continued his predecessor's policy of maintaining the cordon around the gurdwārā at Jaito. On September 12, Ogilvie argued that the Government must take a strong stand against the Akālī agitation to maintain its prestige with the officials, army, and people of Nābhā as well as with the states of Patialā, Jind, and Faridkot. Any

sign of weakness at this juncture might prompt some of these groups to support the Akālīs.<sup>44</sup>

Ten days later an incident occurred at Jaito which enabled the S.G.P.C. and the Akālīs to make a crucial change in their strategy. During the evening of the 13th, and the early morning of the 14th, the Akālīs at the Gangsar Gurdwārā and around it began to make violent speeches against the Nābhā and British Governments. Then the Akālīs either appeared to or actually began to attack the police cordon around the *dīwān* and gurdwārā. Gurdīāl Singh, the Nābhā official in charge, at Jaito, arrested the Akālī leaders. During this commotion an *Akhandpāth*, a continuous reading of the *Gurū Granth*, which had been in progress, was interrupted. Gurdīāl Singh then had the *Gurū Granth* moved by Sikh soldiers to a nearby gurdwārā and the reading continued by other Sikhs whom he had appointed.<sup>45</sup>

After this latest episode at Jaito, the Government of India decided that drastic action would have to be taken against the S.G.P.C. in the near future. Many officials, especially those most involved in Nābhā and Punjāb affairs, were anxious to seize upon the S.G.P.C. and Akālī involvement in an essentially political agitation to discredit their claims to be a religious reform organization. Throughout the agitation over control of the gurdwārās, the British Government had claimed that the S.G.P.C. was more political than religious in its activities. Now the Nābhā agitation seemed a prime opportunity to prove their point. On September 19, assorted Government officials met together to discuss the preparation of a legal case against the S.G.P.C. and its leaders. It was decided that the S.G.P.C. leaders should be arrested as soon as the case was ready.<sup>46</sup>

At this same time the Congress at its special session in Delhī decided to send three observers to Nābhā : Jawāharlāl Nehrū, A. T. Gidwānī, and K. Santānum. Nehrū claimed that they had been sent to observe the oppression practised by the British on the Sikhs but it does seem likely that they also hoped to effect some type of alliance between the Akālī agitation and the Congress in an area where the Congress organization was weak.<sup>47</sup> Wilson-Johnston advised Minchin that he did not want any Congressmen in the state because of the recent Congress decision to restart civil disobedience. Accordingly he issued an order prohibiting their entry which he deemed would be detrimental to public peace.<sup>48</sup> As Nehrū related in his autobiography, he and his two companions ignored the order, entered Nābhā state, were arrested, jailed,

and tried for violation of the order and conspiracy. Even before their trial had begun, the Political Secretary advised Wilson-Johnston that the Government of India thought that it would be sufficient to expel the prisoners from the state at the conclusion of the court proceedings.<sup>49</sup> When Wilson-Johnston protested that such action gave preferential treatment to Congressmen, he was advised by the Government of India that they prescribed such action specifically to keep the Congress and the Akālīs from coalescing while the Congress was considering the Akālī agitation.<sup>50</sup> The Government strategy was successful and Nehrū and company left Nābhā without establishing any meaningful contacts with the Akālīs.

By the end of September the ever-vigilant Punjāb C.I.D. learnt that the S.G.P.C. was changing the orientation of their Nābhā strategy. On September 29, the S.G.P.C. voted to send a large-scale *jathā* of five hundred Akālīs to protest the interruption of the *Akhandpāth* on September 14.<sup>51</sup> Now the S.G.P.C. could once again appear as champions against Government interference in religious affairs. The Government decided, however, that the time to strike had come. During the second week in October the leaders of the S.G.P.C. and the Akālī Dal were arrested, and shortly afterwards the S.G.P.C. was declared an unlawful organization. The charges were sedition and conspiracy to overawe the Government through their recent actions in Nābhā state.<sup>52</sup>

For a time the arrest of the Sikh leaders seemed to be favourable to an intensification of the S.G.P.C. and Akālī campaign. The Congress formed an *Akālī Sahāyak* Bureau at Amritsar to assist the Akālīs in matters of organization and publicity. In early 1924 the Working Committee of the Congress voted to supply some funds to the Akālīs.<sup>53</sup> Then in early February the S.G.P.C. voted to renew the struggle by sending a *shahīdī jathā* of five hundred to Jaito to recite the *Akhandpāth* 101 times in place of the one interrupted in September. When this *jathā* reached Jaito on February 21 and, despite warnings, advanced to the cordoned gurdwārā it was fired upon by Nābhā troops.<sup>54</sup> Though there was strong protest from all sections of the nationalist press against the firing, the S.G.P.C. and the Akālīs were becoming increasingly isolated from several potential sources of support.

Shortly after the firing on the first *shahīdī jathā*, Mahātmā Gāndhī and Lālā Lājpat Rāi both appealed to Akālī leaders to cease sending *jathās* for a while. They argued that the Akālīs should take time to assess the situation and to consult with other nationalist leaders as to their future

course of action.<sup>55</sup> Mahātmā Gāndhī in particular worried whether the Akālīs would be able to maintain their vow of nonviolence under repeated strain. The Akālīs disregarded this advice and dispatched several other *jathās* to Jaito.<sup>56</sup> The participants in these *jathās* were duly arrested; the leaders were imprisoned and the followers were taken to outposts of Nābhā territory such as Bāwal, southwest of Delhī, and released. Meanwhile the Akālīs had alienated the Congress by disregarding its advice and by failing to integrate its campaign within the overall Congress programme.

Within the Sikh community the consequences of the S.G.P.C. and Akālī espousal of Nābhā's cause were even more dramatic. Religious-minded Sikhs were alienated by Akālī support of such a political cause as the abdication of a Mahārājā who was hardly noted for his virtues as an orthodox Sikh. Prior to his abdication and subsequent glorification by the Akālīs, Nābhā had been criticized for various unorthodox actions. They included dining and dancing in a gurdwārā at a celebration of the birth of his heir and his support of the Kūkās, an extremist Sikh sect.<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, the S.G.P.C. flirtation with the Congress which was an avowedly political, secular, Hindū-dominated organization served to tarnish the credentials of the S.G.P.C. in the eyes of religiously inclined Sikhs.

The S.G.P.C. and Akālī demand for the restoration of Nābhā turned Patiālā, the leading Sikh state, against their programme. Contrary to what the S.G.P.C. wanted to believe, the Mahārājā of Patiālā fully supported the Government policy towards Nābhā. As mentioned earlier, Patiālā had been quick to demand strong measures against Nābhā. Moreover, there is evidence that the British Government and the *bête noir* of the Akālīs, Dayā Kishan Kaul, actually served to restrain Patiālā's desires and wilder proposals for retaliation against Nābhā.<sup>58</sup> Patiālā and his camp followers, Jind and Faridkot, consequently, acted in firm support of and co-ordination with Government measures against the Akālīs.<sup>59</sup>

Up to this time the Government had not been sure of Patiālā's support against Akālī agitation. Now Patiālā, Jind, and Faridkot became more active in controlling the Akālīs within their states. Patiālā hired the head of the Punjāb C.I.D., Liāqat Hayāt Khān, to be his Home Minister. One of Hayāt's primary tasks as Home Minister was the reorganization of the Patiālā C.I.D. so it would be more effective against the Akālīs in the state.<sup>60</sup> Besides his support of the counterpropaganda campaign,

Patiālā also volunteered the use of his troops who actually participated in the arrests of some of the *jathās* in 1924 at Jaito.<sup>61</sup> Patiālā even initiated measures to consolidate moderate elements within the Sikh community. One outstanding example occurred in 1924 when Patiālā played host to the Sikh Educational Conference. This group which had been formed at the turn of the century was one of the last rallying points for moderate Sikhs and in its sessions Patiālā wanted to re-emphasize the desirability of advance through the improvement of educational qualifications of Sikhs and more seats in constitutional bodies on all levels rather than through obstructionist agitation.<sup>62</sup> This element of moderate Sikhs would strongly support the Government later through Sikh Sudhār Committees.<sup>63</sup>

Thus, the choice by the S.G.P.C. and the Akālī Dal of the Nābhā abdication for a *morchā* had multiple effects on the Sikh community. First, it alienated the Congress from the S.G.P.C. since each side felt that the other had failed to cooperate to its utmost. Second, religiously inclined Sikhs considered the S.G.P.C. discredited as a religious organization because of its support of such a political cause. Third, the other Sikh states, Patiālā, Jind, and Farīdkot, moved from a fence-sitting position onto the Government side in their attitude towards the Akālīs. After this change of orientation, the states served increasingly as a focus for the resurgence of a moderate group within the Sikh community. Finally, the Akālī leaders' trial which dragged on for over two years immobilized talented leaders, weakened the organizational structure of the S.G.P.C. and permitted the growth of bitter factionalism within the S.G.P.C.

Furthermore, this incident at Nābhā also illuminates what was happening in broader spheres during this period. In the area of nationalist politics it suggests the paucity of suitable causes for agitation immediately after the first non-cooperation movement had ended. Despite the political nature and the potentially divisive character of the Nābhā affair, the S.G.P.C. and Akālī Dal threw caution to the winds and supported Nābhā's claims. Moreover, this decision by the S.G.P.C. and the Akālī Dal is indicative of the growing involvement of religious groups in agitations with strong political overtones.

Second, Nehrū's expedition to Nābhā reflects the growing Congress concern to strengthen their organization where it was weak as well as to win participants for future anti-Government campaigns. The failure of Nehrū's expedition demonstrates the difficulties involved in any confron-

tation between the nationalists and the Indian states. Even though the nationalists might loudly protest that the states were anachronisms, the states with their peculiar administrations, laws, and judicial systems continued to exist. Their laws frequently enabled the princes to deal, in a more arbitrary manner, with opposition to their rule than was possible in British India. Any improvement in administration by the princes without complementary political and legal reforms merely meant that the discretionary state laws would only be more efficiently enforced. As Nehrū sadly commented, a British-administered state combined the disadvantages of a modern bureaucracy and feudalism while it retained the advantages of neither system.<sup>64</sup>

Government policy during this incident shows how it was learning from past experiences and was becoming more skilful in its handling of agitations. By 1923 the Government knew the value of working through Indian institutions of propaganda, and of keeping political groups from combining. It had Nābhā troops arrest the *jathās*; it had Nābhā courts try the leaders of the *jathās*; and it had the Patiālā administration conduct the counterpropaganda campaign. It purposely handled Nehrū carefully to keep the agitation confined to the Punjāb and to prevent the Congress from gaining new strength among the Akālīs. Furthermore, the experience gained by Malcolm Hailey during this episode helped him to deal successfully with the Gurdwārā question when he became governor of the Punjāb in May, 1924.

Finally, this incident illustrates some general features of the relationship between the Government and the Indian states. A type of client-patron relationship existed between the Government and the princes with duties and privileges on both sides. In this case the client, Patiālā, had performed numerous helpful services for the Government during World War I and during the postwar political turmoil while the other client, Nābhā, had neglected his duties and even argued openly with the patron. Therefore, Patiālā was entitled to more sympathetic treatment than Nābhā, and the Government was willing to appoint a formal inquiry to investigate Patiālā's charges against Nābhā. Their sympathy did not necessarily mean that the report of the inquiry would be biased in favour of Patiālā, but rather ensured that Patiālā would be given the benefit of any doubts.

Though the Government's policy towards Nābhā might seem to be drastic punishment for his transgressions, it was only one instance of the strong control exercised by the Government over the princes. In a



memorandum prepared in 1928 for the Indian States Committee which was examining the relationship between the Government and the states, the Political Department listed seventeen occasions when it had intervened in the internal administration of states during the previous ten years. Although the degree of intervention varied in intensity, besides Nābhā, other princes such as Udaipur, Indore, Bharatpur and Jhālāwār were obliged to sever their connections with the administrations of their states. In the conclusion to this memorandum Bertrand Glancy, the Deputy Political Secretary, declared :

In the great majority of instances Government have intervened to prevent flagrant maladministration, to protect State subjects from tyranny to save an individual Ruler from destroying his patrimony by his capricious behaviour or utter disregard for the interests of his people. To abstain from intervention in such cases would be to ignore the obligations incumbent on the Paramount Power : for Government would be failing to preserve the individual State from disruption and would incidentally be suffering the reputation of the Indian States as a whole to deteriorate—a fact which is being brought home every day more and more acutely to far-sighted Rulers.<sup>65</sup>

For the Political Department of the Government of India, the incident at Nābhā was just one more instance of deteriorating administration in an Indian state which called for corrective measures. Abdication by the defaulting ruler precluded the necessity of a court of inquiry and the difficulties surrounding deposition and, therefore, was preferred as the most expedient solution. At that time no one realized the divisive influence the abdication would exert on Sikh politics in particular and Punjāb developments in general.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Jawāharlāl Nehrū, *Toward Freedom* (Boston : Beacon Press, 1958), p. 97.
2. Nābhā to Minchin, July 6, 1923, National Archives of India (Hereafter NAI), Government of India (Hereafter GOI), Home-Political (Hereafter H-P), 1924, File No. 401.
3. Patiālā had an area of 5,942 square miles with a population of 14,99,739; Jīnd had 1,259 square miles with a population of 3,08,183; Nābhā had 948 square miles

- with a population of 2,63,334. *Census of India, 1921, vol. XV, Punjab and Delhi*, Part II, Tables (Lāhore : Punjab Government Publication, 1922), p. 3. During the fiscal year of 1914-15 their revenue totalled approximately ninety lakhs of rupees for Patiālā, twenty-two lakhs for Jind and nineteen lakhs for Nābhā. *Report on the Administration of the Punjab and Its Dependencies for 1914-1915* (Lāhore : Superintendent, Government Printing, Punjab, 1916), pp. 1-3.
4. Michael O'Dwyer, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, to Lord Chelmsford, Viceroy, March 28, 1917, Commonwealth Relations Office Library (Hereafter CROL), Chelmsford Collection, MSS Eur E 264/18. O'Dwyer claimed, "It's a sad wreck of what might have been a fine career, for he [ Nābhā ] has ability—though misdirected—and some good qualities. He also cannot help seeing his hated neighbour Patiālā, who in some respects started so badly, had steadily pulled himself together, shaken off evil habits and associates and is rapidly becoming a power in the land."
  5. Montagu on October 22-23, 1912, CROL, Montagu Collection, MSS Eur D 523/38.
  6. For a biased account of this rivalry see Munnālāl Syngal, *The Patriot Prince or the Life Story of Mahārājā Ripudaman Singh of Nābhā Who Died as a Martyr* (Ludhiānā : Doābā House, 1961), pp. 49-50, 85-91. Syngal was a former Nābhā official.
  7. *The Tribune*, September 2, 1917, p. 6.
  8. Fortnightly report from the Punjab States for the first half of January, 1922, NAI, GOI, H-P, July 1921–December 1922. File No. 18.
  9. The most recent accounts of these developments in Sikh history are in Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, vol. 2, 1839-1964 (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1966) and Baldev Rāj Nayar, *Minority Politics in the Punjab* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1966). Other accounts helpful if read with discretion are *The Gurdwārā Reform Movement and the Sikh Awakening*, with an introduction by Ruchi Rām Sāhni (Lāhore : Publisher unknown, 1922), Sardūl Singh Caveeshar, *The Sikh Studies* (Lāhore : National Publication, 1937) and Ruchi Rām Sāhni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines* (Amritsar : Sikh Itihās Research Board of the S.G.P.C., n. d.).
  10. *Gargaj Akālī*, May 12-13, 1922, and *Pardesī Khālsā*, May 15, 1922, in the *Punjab Press Abstracts* (hereafter the *PPA*), 1922, p. 238 and p. 246. This accusation against Kaul is repeated by Syngal, *The Patriot Prince...*, p. 101.
  11. Notice of Kaul's appointment appeared in *The Tribune*, August 4, 1916, p. 1.
  12. *Qaum Parast*, May 21, 1922, asked the S.G.P.C. to intervene and the *Akālī*, June 9, 1922, deplored the quarrel, *PPA*, 1922, p. 256 and p. 274.
  13. *Truth about Nābhā* (Amritsar : Shiromanī Gurdwārā Parbandhak Committee, 1923, as reproduced by the Pacific Coast Khālsā Diwān Society of Stockton, California), pp. 53-54. Syngal, *The Patriot Prince...*, pp. 86-88, 91-102.
  14. Fortnightly report from the Punjab States for the second half of January, 1933, NAI, GOI, H-P, 1923, File No. 25.
  15. *The Tribune*, June 2, 1923, p. 3, and *Akālī-te-Pardesī*, June 1, 1923.
  16. Narsingha Rāo to G.D. Ogilvie, April 21, 1923, Minchin to Political Dept., GOI, May 5, 1923, Nābhā to Reading, May 5, 1923, NAI, GOI, H-P, 1924, File No. 401.

17. Minchin to J. P. Thompson, Political Secretary, GOI, June 5, 1923, and additional detail supplied in Minchin to G. D. Ogilvie, Officiating Political Secretary, GOI, August 7, 1923, *Ibid.*
18. Note by J. P. Thompson, June 7, 1929, *Ibid.*
19. Reading to Peel, June 12, 1923, Peel to Reading, June 4, 1933, Reading to Peel, June 17, 1923, *Ibid.*
20. Peel to Reading, June 19, 1923, Reading to Peel, June 26, 1923, *Ibid.*
21. Telephone call from Minchin to A. C. MacNabb, Punjāb Govt., July 2, 1923, *Ibid.*
22. Minchin to Thompson, July 4, 1923, Reading to Peel, July 4, 1923, *Ibid.*
23. Minchin to Thompson, July 7, 1923, *Ibid.* Mr O'Grady later presented claims for services rendered to the GOI, even though the GOI had not specifically engaged him to pressure Nābhā. G. D. Ogilvie as Officiating Political Secretary agreed to a settlement of his claims in full in an effort to end O'Grady's connection with Nābhā as soon as possible. See Ogilvie's note dated August 18, 1923, and Ogilvie to Minchin, October 12, 1923, *Ibid.*
24. Report of the Special Commissioner on Disputes between Patiālā and Nābhā and the Findings of the Government of India, July 7, 1923, NAI, GOI, H-P, 1923, File No. 148-11.
25. *Ibid.*
26. For example, see *Kirpān Bahādur*, July 10, 1933, *Khālsā Samāchār*, July 12, 1923, *Partāp*, July 13, 1923, *Bande Mātaram*, July 14, 1923, *PPA*, pp. 375, 376, 377-78, 378-79, respectively.
27. *Truth about Nābhā*, pp. 30-50.
28. See *Babbar Sher*, July 9, 1923, *Akālī-te-Pardesī*, July 14, 1923, *Nation*, July 9, 1923, *Parkāsh*, July 15, 1923, *Loyal Gazette*, July 15, 1923, *PPA*, 1923, pp. 374, 376, 377, 379-80, respectively. Also Syngal, *The Patriot Prince...*, pp. 19-39, for the controversy over the investiture ceremony.
29. Chelmsford to Chamberlain, May 12, 1916, Chamberlain to Chelmsford, July 6, 1916, Chelmsford to Chamberlain, July 29, 1916, CROL, MSS Eur E 264/2 on Chelmsford's own efforts and his use of Mahārājā Scindiā of Gwālior as an intermediary. Also O'Dwyer to Chelmsford, November 5, 1916, CROL, MSS, Eur E 264/16.
30. *The Tribune*, July 12, 1923, p. 4.
31. Report of the Criminal Investigation Department (Hereafter CID). Punjāb Government, presented to conference of GOI and Punjāb officials held by Malcolm Hailey, Home Member, GOI, July 25, 1923, NAI, GOI, H-P, 1924, File No. 401.
32. C. M. G. Ogilvie to Minchin, July 14, 1923, *Ibid.*
33. Note by Patiālā handed to Reading on June 6, 1923, *Ibid.*
34. Patiālā press communique dated July 14, 1923, *Ibid.*
35. Minchin to G. D. Ogilvie reporting the substance of an interview between Minchin and Kaul, July 16, 1923, and Kaul to Minchin, July 19, 1923, *Ibid.*
36. *The Tribune*, July 20, 1923, p. 5.
37. Hailey to G. de Montmorency, Private Secretary to Reading, July 26, 1923, and Reading to Peel, July 16, 1923, NAI, GOI, H-P, 1924, File No. 401.

38. Conference proceedings July 25, 1923, *Ibid.*
39. S.G.P.C. to Reading, August 2, 1923, *Ibid.*, and *The Tribune*, August 3, 1923, p. 1.
40. Report on August 6 meeting of S.G.P.C. by J. M. Dunnett, Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, and Dunnett to A. Langley, Commissioner of Lāhore Division, August 9, 1923, NAI, GOI, H-P, 1924, File No. 401.
41. C. M. G. Ogilvie to Minchin, August 24, 1923, August 26, 1923, August 28, 1923, *Ibid.*
42. C. M. G. Ogilvie to Minchin, August 29, 1923, *Ibid.*
43. The Punjāb CID was unable to infiltrate this meeting but gathered information through a variety of sources. C. A. H. Townsend, Chief Secretary of the Punjāb Government, to Home and Foreign and Political Departments, GOI, September 6, 1923, *Ibid.*
44. C. M. G. Ogilvie in note, dated September 12, 1923, *Ibid.*
45. Wilson-Johnston to Minchin, September 15, 1923, *Ibid.* For pro-Akālī versions, see Ruchī Rām Sāhni, *The Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, pp. 211-12, and *Truth about Nābhā*, pp. 79-80.
46. Reading to Peel, September 16, 1923, and minutes of meeting on September 19, 1923, NAI, GOI, H-P, 1924, File No. 401.
47. Nehrū, *Toward Freedom*, p. 97.
48. Wilson-Johnston to Minchin, September 20, 1923, NAI, GOI, H-P, 1924, File No. 401.
49. G. D. Ogilvie to Wilson-Johnston, September 24, 1923, *Ibid.*
50. Wilson-Johnston to G. D. Ogilvie, September 25, 1923, and G. D. Ogilvie to Wilson-Johnston, September 26, 1923. *Ibid.*
51. G. D. Ogilvie to Wilson-Johnston forwarding Punjāb CID summaries on S.G.P.C., September 28, 1923, plus CID report on S.G.P.C. meeting of September 29, 1923, *Ibid.* A comprehensive resolution condemning the Government's sacrilegious action was passed by the S.G.P.C. on September 29, 1923; for a copy of the resolution and comment see Ruchī Rām Sāhni, *The Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, pp. 215-19.
52. *The Tribune*, October 16, 1923, p. 3, Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, vol. 2, p. 209, M.N. Mitra, *Indian Quarterly Register*, I, 1 (January-March, 1924), p. 99.
53. See the resolutions on the Akālīs passed by the Working Committee of the Congress on January 20-31, 1924, and February 26-27, 1924, Mitra, *Indian Quarterly Register*, I, 1 (January-March, 1924), pp. 22-23.
54. For a full set of statements from all sides about the February firing, see Mitra, *Indian Quarterly Register*, I, 1 (January-March, 1924), pp. 100-12. According to the Government report on the firing, the casualties were fourteen dead and thirty-four wounded (p. 107). While the S.G.P.C. communique termed the Government figures as "absurdly low," it could only say the known dead were seven and the wounded were nineteen (p. 108).
55. Gāndhijī to Akālīs, February 25, 1923, and Lālā Lājpat Rāi to S.G.P.C., Mitra, *Indian Quarterly Register*, I, 1 (January-March, 1924), pp. 112-112 (a).
56. Mitra, *Indian Quarterly Register*, I, 1 (January-March, 1924), pp. 112 (a)-112(e).
57. *Bhārat Mātā*, June 12, 1922, PPA, p. 293, about Nābhā and the Kūkās and *Jathe-*

- dār*, October 19, 1922, *PPA*, p. 529, about Nābhā and the gurdwārā.
58. Reading's comment on Minchin's letter of July 16, 1923, and G. D. Ogilvie to Minchin, July 18, 1923, NAI, GOI, H-P, 1924, File No. 401 and Minchin to J. P. Thompson, March 11, 1924, NAI, GOI, Foreign & Political (Hereafter F & P), 1928, File No. 62 (6)-H.
  59. Minchin to G. D. Ogilvie, September 6, 1923, and September 10, 1923, about promises of help from Patiālā and Faridkot, and the note by C. M. G. Ogilvie, dated September 12, 1923, NAI, GOI, H-P, 1964, File No. 401. For adverse comment about the princely cooperation in the suppression of the Nābhā agitation, see Ruchī Rām Sāhni, *The Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, pp. 208-209, 222-23.
  60. For insight into the reorganization and the CID work against the Akālīs within Patiālā state, see a boasting note by Liāqat Hayāt Khān, dated June 17, 1925, Punjāb State Archives, Patiālā (Hereafter PSAP), Patiālā State Records, Prime Minister's Office, Bastā No. 18, Serial No. 538.
  61. Lt-Col E. G. Gregson in Nābhā to J. P. Thompson, Political Secretary GOI, April 8, 1924, NAI, GOI, H-P, 1924, File No. 67. Patiālā and Jīnd state troops took an active part in the handling of the Third Shahīdī Jathā at the beginning of April, 1924.
  62. For Patiālā's motives in hosting the Conference see a note by Arjan Shāh Singh, dated January 8, 1924, and Kaul to Patiālā January 10, 1924, PSAP, Patiālā State Records, Ijlās-i-Khās, Bastā No. 24, File No. 355.
  63. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, vol. 2, pp. 211-12.
  64. Nehrū, *Toward Freedom*, pp. 101-102.
  65. B. J. Glancy, Political Secretary, GOI, to G. D. Ogilvie, Secretary to the Indian States Committee, February 15, 1928, NAI, GOI, F & P, 1928, Political, File No. 238-P.

POLEMICS AND CONFLICT IN AHMADĪYĀH HISTORY :  
THE MISSIONARIES, THE ULAMĀ AND THE BRITISH

SPENCER LAVAN

I

In 1890, Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad of Qādiyān, Punjāb, declared that he was *masīh mawūd* and *mahdī* of the Muslims. When he also stated his controversial position on the death of Jesus and his reinterpretation of the Qurānic doctrine of *jihād*, Ahmad stirred up a hornet's nest throughout the Islāmic community of the Punjāb. Although he may have made his teachings and claims out of the deepest personal religious motivations, the fact that, at times, his views appeared to be presented arrogantly led to an increasing alienation between Ahmad and the religious communities of the Punjāb.

Because polemics and controversy so often turn to distrust and misunderstanding, the various conflicts in which Ghulām Ahmad found himself during the 1890's have often been misinterpreted and confused by those who have commented upon them during the past eighty years and more. While the theological points upon which Ahmad built his case and against which Muslims, Christians and Ārya Samājīs argued are fairly simple to understand, the interactions of the people who were defending or propagating particular viewpoints in a particular context during that controversial decade have been neither closely examined nor correctly understood in their details.<sup>1</sup>

The causes of Ahmad's controversy with Muslim *māulavīs* and Christian missionaries and his need to communicate with the Government centred around the three basic issues by which he distinguished himself from others : Jesus, *jihād*, and the *mahdī*. It is the purpose of this essay to unravel the various strands of this interaction and place them in a perspective both for Ahmadīyāh history and for modern Indian religious history.

The earliest reactions against Ghulām Ahmad came from fellow Muslims shortly after the publication of the *Fath-i-Islām* and *Tauzih Marām* in 1890 and 1891, the tracts in which he had made his controver-

sial claims. His principal opponents in this struggle were the Muslim *mullāhs*, Abd al-Jabbar and his disciple, Abd al-Haq Ghaznavī of Amritsar, Nazīr Husain of Delhi, Abū Said Muhammad Husain of Batālā and Ahmad-allāh, also of Amritsar. The debate began when Abd al-Haq Ghaznavī challenged Ahmad to a “*mubāhillā*”<sup>2</sup> on the issue of the death of Jesus. Ahmad’s response to this challenge in February, 1891, was to answer by letter, saying that he was prepared to debate but felt that such a debate was unnecessary “to settle minor difference of opinion amongst Muslims.”<sup>3</sup> Since Nazīr Husain, Muhammad Husain and Ahmad-allāh had signed a *fatwā* saying that such a debate was quite permissible among Muslims, Ahmad agreed to go to Amritsar for that purpose and sent a reply which was later published in *Riāz-Hind*, March 15, 1891. The issue at once was sidetracked by Abd al-Haq’s response to this letter which came in the form of an *ishtihār* asking Ahmad to explain why, if he had challenged another *ālim* to a *mubāhillā* in the text of the *Fath*, he would not participate in one now. Ahmad, then, replied to this point, saying that the *maulavī* in question had insinuated that Ahmad was not receiving revelations but was a fraud.

In such a case Mobāhalā was permissible...But never in the history of Islām did anyone challenge . . . to settle such theological differences through Mobāhalā. The curse of God is invoked in Mobāhalā on a liar who deliberately invents a lie, and not on one who simply holds any wrong or erroneous belief.<sup>4</sup>

This first encounter with Abd al-Haq was apparently delayed indefinitely because Ahmad “had not yet received any divine command in the matter.” When this initial challenge did not materialize, the *mullāhs*, according to Ahmad’s principal biographer, turned to Muhammad Husain of Batālā and, plotting together against Ahmad, “instigated him to stand up against Ahmad.”<sup>5</sup> Believing that Ahmad’s early success had been in some measure influenced by Muhammad Husain’s favourable review of the *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadīyāh* in the Ahl-i-Hadīth paper, *Ishāat-i-Sunnāh* and his friendship with Ahmad, the *ulamā* may well have believed that an attack on Ahmad by Husain would have undercut much of Ahmad’s support.<sup>6</sup> Ahmad’s attitude in this moment of crisis was not to accept the advice of men that he should be politic in his relations with the more orthodox *ulamā*. Believing his trust to be “in God and God alone,” he wrote to Muhammad Husain in mid-February :

I am not at all concerned with victory or defeat; all I want is to

remain a devoted and obedient servant of God . . . I am not at all sorry or grieved to know that friends like yourself intend to oppose me because I believe that this opposition will be for the sake of truth. I saw in a vision yesterday that I was writing on my arm, that I was alone and God was with me.<sup>7</sup>

Ahmad sent his two volumes on to Husain and urged that they get together to discuss the issues that concerned the *maulavī*. According to A.R. Dard, even though Muhammad Husain never consented to such a discussion, Ahmad refused to become upset with him. In the following chapter of Dard's biography of Ahmad, entitled "The Pharisee of Batālā," Dard has traced subsequent events which were continued by a bitter correspondence between Muhammad Husain and Ahmad's disciple Nūr al-Dīn.<sup>8</sup>

The *mullāhs* of Ludhiānā already having declared *fatwās*<sup>9</sup> against Ahmad, next joined to oppose him in public debate. The leader of the Ahl-i-Hadīth there challenged Ahmad to debate the "Jesus" issue. Ahmad asked the man to have Muhammad Husain join the debate whereupon Husain insisted that the debate deal only with Ahmad's claim to be the Promised Messiah. This debate, in which Muhammad Husain "never touched the real subject," began on July 20, 1891, and lasted about 12 days. Muhammad Husain debated entirely on the value of *hadīth* while Ahmad stressed *hadīth* only in relation to *Qurān*. This debate ended in such an uproar that a magistrate was forced to order Muhammad Husain to leave town, while Ahmad, feeling the wrath of the controversy, went on to Amritsar for a few days while passions cooled. He then returned to Ludhiānā and finally to Qādiyān.<sup>10</sup> Among the missionaries, Ārya Samājīs, and *mullāhs*, Ahmad became the centre of religious debate at Ludhiānā. It was here that he had made his first real impact outside of Qādiyān.<sup>11</sup>

There seems little doubt that the growing tensions between Ahmad and Muhammad Husain were more than theologically based. Issues of personality and method were also involved. In a letter, dated December 31, 1892, Ahmad wrote that he had had a dream which was "unfavourable" to Muhammad Husain. His friends had had similar dreams and together they sought to warn the *Batālayī mullāh*. Muhammad Husain, "too proud to take the threat seriously," published in response a statement in *Ishāat* (January 9, 1893, vol. XV, No. 1) that Ahmad was an impostor and fraud.<sup>12</sup>

According to a new revelation he received on December 10, 1892,



Ahmad declared that God had now granted him permission to hold a *mubāhillā* against other Muslims. The decision to hold this kind of debate about Islāmic teachings was certainly, in part, the result of the numerous *fatwās* which were excommunicating Ahmad and declaring him to be a *dajjāl*, *mulhid*, *zindīq*, *makkār*, etc.<sup>13</sup>

By the middle of 1895, after Ahmad had also engaged in controversies with Christians and Āryas, he urged the Government to set limits on religious polemics. To implement this, he proposed a Memorial to the Government to amend Section 298 of the Indian Penal Code. To build his case, Ahmad sent the petition to eminent persons throughout north India. While Muhammad Husain favoured the idea, he “declared that he would do everything necessary for its enforcement provided Ahmad had nothing to do with it.”<sup>14</sup> Ahmad, himself, in a letter to *Sadiq al-Akhhbār* of Bahāwalpur (October 31, 1895) indicated rather that “Maulavī Muhammad Husain having offered to take up the matter, the Mirzā will no longer have anything to do with it.”<sup>15</sup>

The controversy with Muhammad Husain reached its height late in the year 1898 and during 1899. The Muslim attack against Ghulām Ahmad was no longer centred only on the death of Jesus issue or on Ahmad’s claim to be *masīh mawūd* and *mahdī* but now also on his interpretation of the issues of *jihād* and loyalty to the Government. In a lengthy article published in *Ishāat-i-Sunnāh* at the end of August, 1898, Muhammad Husain argued that India was not *dār al-harb* “and that consequently taking interest on money even from non-Moslems is unlawful.”<sup>16</sup> In his “Treatise on Jihād” more than a decade earlier, Husain had already defined the concept of “*dār al-Islām*” as referring to any country “so long as all the religious exercises of the Mohammedan religion are not forbidden and stopped.” In making this assertion he was following the *Hanafī* position as stated in the *Fatwā-i-Ālamgīrī* of Aurangzeb that “a *dār-al-Islām* cannot become *Dār-al-Harb* as long as there exists even one performance of the religious acts of Islām . . .”<sup>17</sup>

On the surface, the positions of Ahmad and Muhammad Husain on the matter of *jihād* and loyalty seem identical. The Ahmadīyāh, however, could not be linked with the ambiguous past history of militancy which the British associated with the Wahābī-Ahl-i-Hadīth movements. But growing personal distrust between the two men and their followers certainly played a role in the controversies of 1898 and 1899. In the same late August, 1898, issue of *Ishāat-i-Sunnāh*, for example, Muhammad Husain criticized Ahmad for “making disparaging remarks

regarding the Turkish Government and predicting its downfall." Husain continued his article by insisting that the positive remarks he had made about Ahmad's loyalty in his oft-quoted review of *Barāhīn* he no longer upheld since Ahmad had declared himself *mahdī*. Husain went on to say that he believed the Mirzā insincere and that his praises of Government could not be trusted. He continued :

It is to be hoped that the Muhammadan public will regard him as the enemy of Islām and its followers owing to the disparaging language used by him regarding the sultān, . . .

The Editor also trusts that the authorities will not allow themselves to be deceived by his disrespectful language towards the sultān and his praises of the British Government, as the man is not sincere, and wishes only to please the authorities by means of flattery.

Blistering answers to these charges came in the pages of the Ahmadīyāh paper, *al-Hakam*, on September 27. Muhammad Husain, in preparing a *fatwā* declaring Ghulām Ahmad to be an infidel, had deceived both the people and "simple *ulamās*."

On being apprised of the impropriety of the act done by them, some of the *ulamās* expressed their sorrow, while others submitted written apologies to the *Khalifā* of God for having done so through a mistake. The father of lies (Shaikh Battāl) has thereby shown that he does not deserve to be placed on the throne of the enemy of Adam (Satan). Of course he is fit for being relegated to the nation of the Jews . . .<sup>18</sup>

Shortly, Muhammad Husain found himself a new ally while Ghulām Ahmad was to cope with a new opponent, Mullāh Muhammad Bakhsh, editor and proprietor of the *Jāfar Zatallī* of Lāhore.<sup>19</sup> In the November 29 issue of *al-Hakam*, Ahmad cited the remarks made against him in the *Jāfar* of November 10,<sup>20</sup> and replied by saying that he had prayed to God that if such abuses as Bakhsh and his colleague Abū al-Hasan of Thibet had directed against him be true, then God should bring him into disgrace within the thirteen-month period extending from December 15, 1898, to January 15, 1900.<sup>21</sup> Listing a series of revelations he had then received, Ahmad asserted that the judgement of God would then fall on both parties in the dispute, i.e. either on him or on Muhammad Husain, Muhammad Bakhsh or Abū al-Hasan.

In the November 10 article, Muhammad Husain had apparently indicated his willingness to accept Ahmad's recent challenge to debate.

His reply stated, however, that he

does not agree to accept the period of one year as the time during which the wrath of God is to befall the liar, and wishes that the effect of the *mubāhillā* should appear at the time of the meeting or at the most within three days . . . The Maulavī does not wish to take the reward of Rs. 825 but proposes for the Mirzā . . . that his face should be blackened and he be brought into disgrace ; and that instead of receiving Rs. 825, he (the Maulavī) will be content if 825 blows with a shoe be dealt on the head of the Mirzā by his followers and he be made to sit on a donkey and paraded in the streets.<sup>22</sup>

That these issues were disturbing to the Muslim community in general was evident from the comments of the Hindū paper *Akhbār-i-Ām* which suggested that if the three opponents of Ahmad did not suffer the prescribed disgrace, "and if they do not bite their hands, it will not show that the revelation was incorrect, but merely that these men must have repented in their hearts."<sup>23</sup> *Paisāh Akhbār* stood more clearly opposed to Ahmad. Referring to a recent court case<sup>24</sup> against him in which the public was informed that Ahmad would have to restrict his prophesying to his own followers and "abstain from creating excitement among the public," the editor appeared annoyed by the fact that Ahmad could not resist public pronouncements. He continued by suggesting that Ahmad could be prosecuted for publishing this latest prophecy against Muhammad Husain. The article concluded by saying :

If Ghulām Ahmad is really a prophet and has been sent into this world with a special mission, he ought to be able to convince his opponents of the truth of his claims without resorting to trickery . . . it would have been better if he had specified the nature of the calamity which he says is to befall Maulavī Muhammad Husain within thirteen months. It is moreover to be hoped that any ordinary sorrow or grief will not be taken the fulfilment of the prophecy.<sup>25</sup>

In the events that followed, the situation seemed to deteriorate. On December 1, Muhammad Bakhsh, a deputy inspector of police at Batālā, reported to the Deputy Commissioner of Gurdāspur the possibility of a breach of the peace resulting from the tensions between Muhammad Husain and Ahmad. Muhammad Husain had applied for permission to carry arms because he had feared for his life since Ghulām Ahmad had made his prophecy on November 21. At the same time, the Gurdāspur police confirmed the allegation that Ahmad was violating the

order of Captain M. W. Douglas not to prophesy in public.<sup>26</sup> Both men were called into court on December 15 to show cause why they should not be compelled to keep the peace. Counsel for Ahmad was Maulavi Fazl al-Dīn while counsel for Husain was a Shaikh Nabī Bakhsh. Although the case was put off until January 5, 1899, when Muhammad Husain telegraphed that he could not appear that day, the hearing was again postponed until it finally began on January 11.<sup>27</sup>

That the feeling of Muslims in the area between Lāhore and Gurdāspur had reached a pitch in the days leading up to the hearing is evident from the article in *Akḥbār-i-Ām* on January 4, 1899. The writer referred to the prophecies of Ghulām Ahmad which previously had not come true. Although only ten days had passed since his prophecy concerning Muhammad Husain, Muhammad Bakhsh and Abū al-Hasan (i.e. December 15 to 25), there had already been two attempts on the life of Muhammad Bakhsh.

First on the 17th of December, 1898, a poisonous snake . . . was thrown at night on the roof of his house. The cobra was, however, found dead in the morning owing to the cold. On the morning of the 24th idem a small pot containing a snake was placed on the staircase of his house. This snake was shown to the City Inspector of Police, Lāhore, at 10 a.m. and a report recorded in the Police Register. This was evidently done in the hope that the Mullāh, when descending the stairs, would be bitten by the snake, (and) he would die and the prophecy of the Mirzā would be fulfilled . . . The writer trusts that the Almighty will protect the Mullāh against the machinations of the Mirzā.<sup>28</sup>

Although the attitude of *Akḥbār-i-Ām* in this commentary appeared just the reverse of its statements against the Mullāh in the issue of December 3, one need not attribute this so much to inconsistency by the editor as to his general dismay at this strife among the Muslims themselves.

The hearing concerning Muhammad Husain and Ghulām Ahmad continued in Gurdāspur until February 24, when both men were asked to sign a declaration prepared by the District Magistrate (Deputy Commissioner), a Mr Dowie. *Akḥbār-i-Ām* and *Paisāh Akḥbār* both reported on February 27 that Mr Dowie had indicated that, while he did not wish to interfere with the religious affairs of any one, he felt it was his primary duty to maintain peace and order in the district. As such he felt that Muhammad Husain would have to agree to cease using

abusive language against Ahmad while Ahmad, in turn, would have to stop prophesying the death and destruction of his opponents.<sup>29</sup>

At this point it might be well to ask just why Ahmad resorted so heavily to the pamphlet and to polemics as a way of expressing himself. While writing would limit his appeal to the rural masses, his use of the tract and later of the Ahmadīyāh journals did no more than place him among numerous religious and political groups who began to use publishing as the way to make their view known during the late nineteenth century. A certain amount of the credit for this approach must be given to the Christian missionary movement which helped to introduce printing and publishing in the Punjāb as it did in so many other parts of Asia. At the same time, it is important to add that Ahmad's public debates, speeches and sermons impressed large crowds, many of whom probably could not read his writings.

The context in which Ahmad and Muhammad Husain developed their impasse was one which was not only concerned with an attempt to reform Islām but also one reflecting their personal needs as religious leaders with the added complexity of asserting their roles in a British-dominated society. That neither was the "tool" of the Government should be amply clear from the outcome of the hearing of 1899. In Ahmad's case, further proof is evident in his numerous publications soliciting the attention of Government to his viewpoint and in the response of Government in documents to be cited below.

## II

Ahmad had had his first debates with Christian missionaries during his early years at Siālkot. When he first accepted *bayāh* in 1889 it was at Ludhiānā, a centre of missionary activity and the site of the most important Christian missionary Urdū language newspaper, the *Nūr-i-Afshān*, which was first published in 1873.<sup>30</sup> Several years before the *bayāh* ceremony at Ludhiānā, several native Christian missionaries had already warned the Christian community against the growing influence of Ahmad through the pages of *Nūr-i-Afshān*. Those particularly anxious to oppose Ahmad were Imād al-Dīn, Thākar Dās and Abd-Allāh Asim.<sup>31</sup> These men, all Indians, were connected both with the American Presbyterian Mission and the Church Missionary Society at Ludhiānā and other centres in the Punjāb.

While at Batālā, where he had taken his son for medical treatment in

May of 1888, Ahmad began a prophesying debate with the Rev. Fath Masih. Raised at Batālā under the tutelage of the German missionary, H. U. Weitbrecht-Stanton, Fath Masih was ordained as a deacon by the Bishop of Lāhore in 1891.<sup>32</sup> Believing he had bested Fath Masih because the latter could not admit to having received direct revelations, Ahmad chose to remain in Batālā to follow up the "victory" with the aim of then challenging any European Christian to debate.<sup>33</sup>

Ahmad especially antagonized the Christians at a small village in Amritsar district known as Jandiālā, an outstation of the medical mission run at Amritsar by Dr Henry Martyn Clark and established in 1882. The Christians and Muslims at Jandiālā had been "pin-pricking" each other. In a letter to a local Muslim, Muhammad Bakhsh Pahndā, Dr Clark proposed a public debate. This Muhammad Bakhsh wrote to Ahmad for advice and after some controversy between the local parties at Jandiālā, the Christians agreed to allow Ahmad to represent the Muslims while Abd-Allāh Asim was to debate for the Christians. An agreement was signed on April 24, 1893, setting the debate for May 22-27 and May 29-June 3, 1893. In the first part of the debate Ahmad would explain his claim that "every religion should prove its truth with living signs" and then would question his opponent about the divinity of Jesus. Asim, in return, would question Ahmad during the second half of the debate on the questions of God's mercy, free will and predestination, compulsion in religion, proof of the *Qurān* being the word of God and proof of Muhammad being a messenger of God.<sup>34</sup>

As the debate progressed, witnessed for fifteen long days by many Muslims as well as by Christians, relations between the two principal debaters became more and more acrimonious. In his concluding statement, Ahmad told of a sign he had just received from God

that of the two parties to the debate the one who was deliberately following a falsehood and forsaking the true God . . . would be thrown into "Haviyah" within fifteen months, each month corresponding to a day of this debate, and that he would be severely disgraced provided he did not turn to the truth ; and that the person who . . . believed in the true God would be openly honoured . . . Now, I ask Deputy Sāhib (Athim) : "If this sign is fulfilled, would you accept it or not as . . . divine prophecy . . . ? Would it be or not a strong proof that the Holy Prophet (peace be on him), whom you call a Dajjāl . . . is a true prophet ?"<sup>35</sup>

An entirely different view of the events at Jandiālā appeared in the

Annual Report of the Church Missionary Society for 1894 where Dr Clark reported :

The chosen champion of the Mohammedans was a certain Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad, of Qādiān, a man of Moghal descent, and deeply imbued, Dr Clark says, with rationalism ; he had, indeed, been excommunicated by the orthodox Moslems. The Christian champion was Mr Abdullāh Athim, one of the earliest converts from Mohammedanism. The controversy took place in Amritsar, in the verandah of Dr Martyn Clark's house, and lasted two weeks . . .

. . . The Mirzā is a heretic. The vast majority of Mohammedans are ranked against him. Though he has made great stir, his actual followers are extremely few ; nevertheless the dispute between them (or rather the Mirzā) and the orthodox has been long and exceedingly acrimonious. Things have come to such a pass that both parties finally resolved to resort to a *mubāhillā*. In this each party states its position, commends its cause to God, appeals to Him as against its adversary, and prays that the most withering curses may blast whichever of the parties is in the wrong. It is this imprecation of Divine vengeance which is more particularly technically termed *mubāhillā*.

The Mirzā wanted to have a *mubāhillā* with us, but we told him that while the children of darkness might curse each other, we followed the Prince of Peace, and we were commanded to bless and curse not. Our prayer for him and his friends was that they might obtain eternal life—that is, know the only true and wise God, and Jesus Christ His Son, whom He hath sent.<sup>36</sup>

The marked difference in the Ahmadīyāh and Christian reports of this debate points up, once again, the difficulty of getting to the historical truth or reality of the situation. What each reported of the events is what each found to be most significant for his point of view; for, clearly, neither reporter was in any sense objective. In his report to the *Church Missionary Society Annual* for 1895, Dr Clark described the conversion of a former Muslim who had served Ahmad for several years. Since this same convert led “four others to Christ” including “the Mirzā's own brother-in-law,” Clark could not help but wax exuberantly at this Christian victory.<sup>37</sup> Writing of Ahmad's prophecy before the fifteen-month period had expired, Clark said :

It is impossible to express the hold it has taken on the public mind.

It is a plain, clear issue; it is no longer a war of words, or a drawing of distinctions—a sign from heaven is to be vouchsafed: “Yea, God Himself shall decide in this controversy.” It has been the theme of converse, of close attention during the past year. From Madrās to Peshāwar through the length and breadth of broad India, thousands upon thousands of men have been watching with thoughts intent on the far northern city where Islām had thrown down the wager of battle, and where God Himself would decide.

As I write, the days are swiftly speeding by, and the crisis is now intense beyond words. A bare month is all that remains, and the heavens are still as brass. The anxious thought of Mohammedan hearts is, will the sign come—will Islām be vindicated? In the Mirzā’s mosque at Qādiān, prayer is offered all day long and far into the night with crying and tears: “O God, save Islām. It is the hour of darkness. Let not Thy faith be put to shame—let the sign be given.”<sup>88</sup>

On the night that Ahmad’s prophecy expired and Abd-Allāh Asim was still alive, the *Punjab Mission News* reported:

Great excitement prevailed, and many telegrams flew hither and thither over the Punjāb on the night of September 5, when the Mirzā of Qādiān’s prophecy against Mr Abdullāh Athim expired . . . Seeing that Mr Athim is an old man, and was at the time in extremely feeble health, this was, to say the least, a very shrewd forecast, with two hot weathers carefully brought into the reckoning. However, we are thankful to say that Mr Athim is now in better health than he has been for a long time, despite the excitement of the past few months, and the very decided efforts which appear to have been made in certain quarters to aid the prophecy to its fulfilment by measures which savour strongly of the Criminal Courts . . .

A.R. Dard’s response to the failure of Ahmad’s prophecy to materialize began by chiding the *mullāhs* and Christian missionaries “who were always anxious to run down Ahmad by every means . . .” Their jubilation at sunset on September 4, 1894, was not justifiable since on that very day Ahmad had received the word of God “drawing his attention to the qualifying words of the prophecy and declaring that Athim had turned towards the truth . . . he had made no speech against Islām and had written no article or book during all these months.”<sup>89</sup>



The most fiery issue which involved Ahmad, the missionaries, and other Muslims and Hindūs, centred around the publication of the tract entitled "Ummahāt al-Muminīn" apparently written by a native Christian, Ahmad Shāh Shaikh, in the style of an earlier pamphlet by a Rev. T. Williams, "Tārīkh-i-Muhammad," which had been banned by the Punjāb Government in 1892.<sup>40</sup> While *al-Hakam* led the Muslim press in condemning the author for "abusing the Prophet in the filthiest language . . . and circulating this work among the Muhammadans, without their applying for it . . ." solely to wound their religious feelings, *Nūr-i-Afshān* took up the banner for the tract by informing the Muslims in its issue of April 8, 1898, that so many orders had been received for the pamphlet during the past month that it was now out of stock.<sup>41</sup>

In the issue of May 13, 1898, *al-Hakam* published a "Memorial" criticizing the action of the *Anjuman-i-Himāyat-i-Islām* asking the Government to stop publication of the "Ummahāt." The argument of *al-Hakam* was that it was too late to stop the damage already done by the pamphlet, but, worse than this, such a request showed the Christians that Muslims were too weak to defend themselves. At the same time the editor of *al-Hakam* criticized the *Punjāb Observer* which had already supported the action of the *Anjuman*.<sup>42</sup>

On May 27, the Ārya Samājī paper, *Sat Dharam Parchārak* of Jullundur city, entered the debate taking advantage of this Christian-Muslim controversy to express its own views. In describing the pamphlet "Ummahāt" the writer said that in it

the character of the founder of Islām has been criticized on the strength of works of authority. So far as the editor is aware, the writer has dealt with the matter in a dignified way. But the Muhammadans, who are notorious for this impatience and quickness to take offence, have sent memorials asking Government to put a stop to the circulation of the pamphlet . . . Let them think of the Ārya Samāj, which is carrying on its work in spite of the hundreds of pamphlets written in abuse of that religion . . .<sup>43</sup>

When the Punjāb Government refused to suppress the pamphlet, *al-Hakam* expressed its approval in the issue of June 13 saying that

there is only one physician who can diagnose and cure the disease of Islām, and that the name of the physician is Jesus, son of Mary, in the world of angels, and Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad in this world.

Continuing the report, the editor promised a pamphlet in both Urdū and

English in which Ahmad would give a "crushing reply."<sup>44</sup>

The debates continued week by week in the press until the editor of *Nūr-i-Afshān* proposed, early in August, that a second edition of the "Ummahāt al-Muminīn" be published by the Punjāb Religious Book Society.<sup>45</sup> At the same time, *al-Hakam* joined this time by *Sirāj al-Akhbār* of Jhelum continued the attack against the pamphlet and *Nūr-i-Afshān*. In its issue of July 27, the *Hakam* commented

that the *Nūr Afshān* is already trembling lest Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad should, in his reply to the Ummahāt-i-Muminīn, show up Christianity in its true colours . . . and states that he is writing an "Ilzāmī" reply (counterattack) and collecting the hostile and false writing of Jews and other European infidels . . . The *Nūr Afshān* will then find what is meant by a reply based on research and what is the truth of the assertions made by the author of the *Ummahāt*. The *Nūr Afshān* is raising an outcry beforehand because it knows what a powerful and learned writer the Mirzā is. It is therefore anxious to make the public believe that the Mirzā's reply will be a collection of the writings of European infidels . . .<sup>46</sup>

The response of *Nūr-i-Afshān* to this frontal attack by Ahmad and his paper was to publish a notice in the August 19 issue which denied the assertion that "Mirzā Ghulām (was) the prince of writers." Christianity had nothing to fear from his pen for it had already withstood the writings of Hume, Gibbon and others. Before them, Ahmad "is a mere schoolboy."<sup>47</sup>

As this was the time when Ghulām Ahmad's greatest struggle against Muhammad Husain of Batālā and the editor of *Mullāh Jāfar Zatlī*, Muhammad Bakhsh, was beginning, Ahmad's attention to the "Ummahāt" issue seems to have relented shortly except for the publication of his pamphlet, "A Cry of Pain," which appeared early in 1899.

In this pamphlet, Ghulām Ahmad began by decrying those Muslims who, like the Anjuman, would simply memorialize the Government in order to suppress circulation of the "Ummahāt." What is essential, he continued, is the ability to be a "Muslim religious controversialist," for he who would undertake this task must be possessed of ten qualifications. These Ahmad then enumerated in detail.<sup>48</sup>

In concluding the pamphlet, Ghulām Ahmad reiterated his stand towards "our benign Government" which "every Muhammadan should obey . . . with complete sincerity and true loyalty . . . because its constitu-

tion offers no obstacle, even in the least, to the development of our spiritual life and to the propagation of our religion."<sup>49</sup> It should be clear that there was no discrepancy between Ahmad's position about loyalty to the Government and his insistence that the Christian missionaries should be answered boldly and courageously.

Thus, if I had not counterbalanced such malicious writings against Islām, there was a serious danger of breach of peace. Even a refutation of hostile writings against Islām is a duty which we owe to our rulers because it materially promotes the aims and objects of the Government.<sup>50</sup>

### III

The above quotation leads naturally into a consideration of Ahmad's communications with the Government about the loyalty of the Ahmadiyāhs, as well as a more detailed consideration of his interpretation of the Islāmic doctrine of *jihād*. Although Ahmad had pledged his loyalty to the Government many times before 1894, the first work he totally devoted to the subject was the short pamphlet, "My Attitude Towards the British Government," published in Lāhore in 1895 and written specifically to answer charges levelled against him in the *Civil and Military Gazette*, October 24, 1894. According to the cover page of this tract, copies were sent to H.M. the Empress of India, the Secretary of State for India, H. E. the Governor-General of India, Lieutenant-Governors, Chief Commissioners, Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, etc.<sup>51</sup>

As in an earlier tract, "Kashf-ul-Ghitā," Ahmad began with a statement about the patriotism of his ancestors and of his sixteen-year programme teaching "true loyalty and submission, and denounc(ing) *jihād* in the received sense of the word to be a sacrilege."<sup>52</sup> After asserting the God of the *Qurān* to be a God of peace and love who teaches that "believers" must have full control over their passions, Ahmad chided "the bigotry of the ignorant *maulavīs* and . . . the calumnies of the Christian missionaries" which were responsible for the misinterpretation of *jihād* in these times. Having taken this position so many times, Ahmad inquired, how could the editor of the *Civil and Military Gazette* call him "a political agitator" and make "such an unjust and untrue remark?"<sup>53</sup>

Probably Ahmad's most detailed discussion of the issue appeared in the pamphlet, "Jihād and the British Government," published at Lāhore

in 1900. After tracing the concept linguistically and in the early history of Islām, Ahmad reiterated the points of contemporary misunderstanding which he had already dealt with in detail in the previous tracts, "My Attitude" and "Kashf-ul-Ghitā." In this case, Ahmad also introduced his own role by saying :

Now that the Promised Messiah has made his appearance, it is the duty of every true Muslim to hold back from *jihād*. Had I not come, the error would, to some extent, have been pardonable. But now that I have come and the promises of old have been fulfilled, those who take up the sword under the pretence of the support of religion have no excuse for their conduct, and they shall be called to account before their Lord.<sup>54</sup>

After attacking the ignorant *maulavīs* who urged the committing of murder in the name of *jihād*, Ahmad, in a supplement, discussed his conception of the *mahdī*.

Although Ahmad's position was reiterated for his English-speaking audience in numerous articles appearing in *Review of Religions* after 1902, the crowning statement of his attitude appeared in his final paper, "A Message of Peace" (*Paighām-i-Sulh*) which was to be read at Lāhore on May 31, 1908, only a few days after Ahmad's sudden death. The paper was read on June 21 at University Hall in Lāhore, "in a gathering of over 5,000 men including most of the respectable leaders of Hindū and Muslim society."<sup>55</sup>

The essay was both a strong stand on the principles of Islām and a complex study in comparative religions reflective of many articles which had appeared in the early volumes of *Review of Religions* as edited by Muhammad Ali. Although Ahmad did not fail to criticize the teachings of Jews, Christians and Āryas alike, there really lay a note of peace behind what he was saying, perhaps as if he knew, having suffered considerably from physical pain and disease during his lifetime, that his end was near. Fully aware of the degree to which communal tensions had arisen, he wrote in the essay :

Dear Countrymen, there is nothing like peace. Let us become one nation and one people by means of this compact. You see how much discord there is in the land and how greatly the country has suffered on account of this mutual refutation. Come and try even now how great are the blessings of mutual approbation. This is the best means of bringing about a reconciliation . . .<sup>56</sup>

With the last thirty years of his life dominated by deep religious controversy, Ahmad certainly tried in this last address, controversial as some of its substance may also have been, to make amends and to persuade his fellow Indians, of whatever religion, as well as the Government that his intention was one of peace.

If this was so, it is significant to note that in spite of all that Ghulām Ahmad did to make known his aims to the British Government in India their records of his activities and movement did not reflect such a reciprocal positive concern. Writing in answer to a report for information on the position of the Ahmadīs in India following difficulties between Ahmadīs and Muslims in Hong Kong during June of 1912 concerning the use of a Muslim cemetery, C. A. Barron, Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjāb, reported in a letter from Simlā, dated September 12, 1912, the following information known to the Government about the Ahmadīs:

Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad of Qādīān, District Gurdāspur, first came to notice in 1883 when he was described as a Wahābī and had already begun to preach and to claim that he was inspired by God.

In 1891, he was well to the fore, challenging all *maulavis* to discussion as to his claims. By this time he had the beginnings of a following, although of course he was condemned by all orthodox Muhammadans as an impostor and a heretic.

It was in 1890 that with a view to the Census, the title of "Ahmadī" Muhammadans was adopted by him, and a notice issued to all his followers, enjoining their registration as members of the Ahmadiyāh sect. In this notice he claimed to have over 30,000 adherents; but according to the returns, which the Census Superintendent considered practically correct, their number in the Punjāb was only 1,134.

The Mirzā had now advanced a long way beyond his original claim to be an inspired prophet. He was "The Messiah"—desired alike by Muhammadans and Christians.

Seven years later he set about taking a census for himself of his followers; but no result of this seems to have been published, and it is doubtful if it was ever completed.

It is difficult to say what their numbers are now, but, according to the census of last year, there were altogether 18,695 persons over 5 years registered as Ahmadīs.

Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad died in May, 1908, and was succeeded

by Mīrzā Hakīm Nūr-ud-dīn, late court physician to His Highness the Mahārājā of Kashmīr, who is the present head of the sect.

The beliefs of the Ahmadīs are briefly summarized in the Mirzā's decalogue, which he calls the ten conditions of *baiat* (initiation). There is nothing remarkable in them, except that sympathy with all persons, Muslim or non-Muslim, is enjoined, and it is asserted that the conquest of the world to Islām is to be effected by peace . . .

Although, of course, the Mirzā's speeches and writings led to much ill-feeling and some disturbances he and his followers were considered heretics by the true Muhammadans, yet our records do not disclose a single instance in which his followers have been denied the use of mosques or Muhammadan burying grounds or in any way molested, except in one case at Cuttack where some converts to Ahmadism wished to change the form of worship in the principal mosque in the town—a course to which the rest of the Muhammadan population naturally objected, *vide* paragraph 165 of Bengāl S. A. of 1904.<sup>57</sup>

The *jihād* of pamphlets to which Mr Barron referred did not remain only a literary *jihād* in the stormy years after Ahmad's death. The tracts, meetings, sermons, controversy and polemics, coming as they did from every group, sect and religious leader, seem almost to have been a reflection of the Punjābī personality : defence of one's own view of the truth and quickness to take offence at the implications or actions of others, the result of which was an intolerable situation for the ruling powers. The "Message of Peace" which Ahmad wrote at the end of his life could not possibly have had the effect he might have wished it to, for Ahmad himself had contributed to the unpeaceful atmosphere throughout the Punjāb. Even though he had fulfilled the function of an Islāmic *mujaddīd* and, in his own eyes and those of his followers, of the *masīh mawūd* and *mahdī*, these latter claims were never accepted by the mainstream of Indian Islām, especially in the context of a militant native Christian missionary movement and an equally militant Ārya Samāj reforming Hindūism.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Recent short articles by non-Muslim scholars (for example, Murray Titus, *Islām in India and Pākistān*, pp. 256-71; W. C. Smith, *Modern Islām in India*; K. Cragg,

- Contemporary Counsels in Islām*, pp. 339-44; and Freeland Abbott, *Islām and Pākistān*, pp. 148-62), while dealing with the Ahmadīyāhs in general and with sensitivity, have not unravelled the complex issues and personalities within the polemics. The early studies by Christian missionaries (such as H. Griswold in the *Indian Evangelical Review*, vol. XXIX, No. 113, January, 1903, pp. 322-54; Walter in the *E. R. E.* or in his short volume, *The Ahmadīyāh Movement*; or Julius Richter's *Indische Missionsgeschichte*, translated by S. H. Moore as *A History of Missions in India*, F. H. Revell, New York, 1908, pp. 402-404), are clearly written from a missionary viewpoint, not at all sympathetic with Ahmad or his movement.
2. The word "mubāhillā" means "to curse." In the form employed here it means "to curse each other," a practice ordinarily permitted to Muslims in debating non-Muslims but not previously known to have been used by Muslims against each other. The incidents referred to here take on unusual significance in the light of this.
  3. A. R. Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, vol. I, Sulṭān Bros., Lāhore, 1949, p. 178.
  4. *Ibid.*, p. 179.
  5. *Ibid.*, p. 181. Muhammad Husain of Batālā was the outstanding leader of the Ahl-i-Hadīth movement in the Punjāb during Ahmad's lifetime. They had been students together in Batālā and, in 1884, Husain had praised Ahmad's early attacks on the Brahmo and Ārya Samāj movements. It was when Ahmad began to claim he was Promised Messiah and *mahdī* of the Muslims that a breach between the two men began. For an Ahmadī view on Muhammad Husain, see Note 12.
  6. *Ibid.*, pp. 181-82. Dard's argument seems quite plausible on this point.
  7. *Ibid.*, p. 182.
  8. Nūr al-Dīn was the first *khalifāh* of the Ahmadīyāh movement, 1908-1913.
  9. Dard, pp. 184-95. According to a major footnote in Dard, p. 426, the following *fatwās* were issued against Ahmad as early as 1890-1891: In the joint *fatwās* issued in 1890 against him by certain *maulavis* of the Punjāb and other parts of India the following are some of the expressions used: Dajjāl—a word taken to mean "personification of all vices" by the issuers of the *fatwā* (*Fatwā Ulemā-i Punjāb wā Hindustān*, p. 41); Dahurriyyāt-ud-Dajjāl, i.e. "children of dajjāl" (*Fatwā*, p. 41); Kazāhab, i.e. "a confirmed liar and fabricator" (*Fatwā*, p. 87); Mulhid wā zindīq, i.e. "a faithless infidel and a double dealing heretic" (*Fatwā*, p. 90); Bad-tareen-i-Khalq, i.e. "the most wicked of God's creatures" (*Fatwā*, p. 96); Ashaddul-murtazen, i.e. "worst of apostates" (*Fatwā*, p. 119); Uspar khudā kee lānat, i.e. "accursed of God" (*Fatwā*, p. 149); Uskā moonh kālā ho, i.e. "may his face be blackened" (*Fatwā*, p. 150); Dajājilā kā ra's-i-raees, i.e. "the ring-leader of the dajjāl" (*Fatwā*, p. 155); Kaj-rau, baleed . . . us shaitān se ziyādāh gumrāh hai jo is ke sāth khel rahā hai . . ., i.e. "perverse, dunce . . . even more astray than his playmate the devil . . ." (*Fatwā*, p. 101); Is Qādīanee ke chooze Hanood-o-Nasārā ke mukhannāsīān, i.e. "the chicks of this Qādīānī are castrated eunuchs of Hindūs and Christians" (*Fatwā*, p. 100) etc., etc.
  10. *Ibid.*, pp. 196-204.
  11. *Ibid.*, p. 206. The first *bayāh* to Ahmad was made by his followers at Ludhiānā in 1889, not at Qādīyān.
  12. *Ibid.*, p. 274. Of Muhammad Husain's personal life, Dard offers this footnote on

pp. 272-73 :

Muhammad Husain had two wives and seven sons and three daughters. He himself says that they had all turned out to be thoroughly wicked and irreligious. They severed all connection with their father and some of them even conspired to kill him (*Ishāat-i-Sunnāh*, vol. 22, No. 8, pp. 225, 226).

In 1910 Muhammad Husain complained of his children's wickedness to the editor of *Al-Hakam*, Qādiān, who advised him to send the two younger ones to the Qādiān school. He accepted this advice and sent them to Qādiān. When his friends came to know of it he had to write in defence in the *Ahl-i-Hadīth*, Amritsar, dated 25-2-1910, that the boys were well looked after and that their religious beliefs were not being interfered with. But the enemies of Ahmad could not bear it, so they pressed Muhammad Husain to get his sons out of Qādiān. At last he yielded and sent them to Ropar where they drifted into ways of profligacy . . .

Muhammad Husain died a miserable death in the beginning of 1920 at Batālā. (See *Batālavī kā Anjām* by Mir Qāsim Ali, 1931.)

13. Dard, p. 275; see note 9.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 343.
15. *Selections from the Vernacular Press of the Punjāb*, vol. VIII, No. 45, from *Sadiq al-Akhbār*, October 31, 1895. The original Vernacular Press Act IX of 1878 was promulgated during the viceregency of Lord Lytton. For text see Margarita Barns, *The Indian Press*, London, 1940, pp. 281-88. In 1881, when Lord Ripon replaced Lytton, he abolished the Press commissionership despite a Memorial from most vernacular newspapers urging its retention (pp. 292-93). Instead, acts opposing seditious writings were promulgated and enforced (pp. 305-6). Since the next major Press Act did not become law until 1910, the plea of Ahmad to the Government for some kind of enforcement was certainly a relevant request in the 1890's.
16. *S.V.N.P.*, vol. XI, No. 39, p. 607, from *Ishāat-i-Sunnāh* (Lāhore) (received September 8, 1898—probably published during August).
17. Muhammad Husain, "Iqtisād fi masāil al-jihād," 1887, p. 10.
18. *S.V.N.P.*, vol. XI, No. 39, p. 607; *al-Hakam*, September 27 (misprint indicates August 27), 1898.
19. *Mullāh Jāfar Zatallī* was published at the Tāj-ul-Hind Press but never had a circulation of more than 200 copies. Its editor, Muhammad Bakhsh, came from Kashmīr, was the son of a baker and was born in 1857. He did not become proprietor of the press until 1903 although he had worked as a pressman since at least 1891. The *Punjāb Press Report* of 1902 describes the paper as follows: "The paper is religious and especially directed against Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad of Qādiān ; contains bitter attacks on the Mirzā, whose prophecies and arguments it undertakes to refute. The name of the paper meaning Mullāh Jāfar, the Buffoon, is an appropriate one for it." Barrier and Wallace, *The Punjāb Press*, E. Lansing, Michigan, 1970, p. 94. In March of 1898 it had published an article announcing the death of Ahmad to which *al-Hakam* of April 3 responded: "The *al-Hakam* (Qādiān) of 3rd April, 1898, calls the attention of Government to a notice issued by Mullāh Muhammad Bakhsh (proprietor of the *Jāfar Zatallī*) in which the latter stated that Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad of Qādiān had been taken ill with the plague



- and had died without repeating the Kalimā; that he was buried in the jungle, permission for burial in the Muhammadan graveyard, which is close to the village, being prohibited on sanitary ground; and that a portion of the corpse having been devoured by some wild animal, the followers of the Mirzā buried his remains a second time. This false notice, which was published on the 1st April, has given great offence to the followers of the Mirzā, who form a large community consisting of respectable officials, loyal *raïses* and merchants. As a matter of fact, the Mirzā is alive and in good health. The editor is of opinion that the notice in question is a seditious one, and calls upon Government to prosecute its author under the new law of sedition." *S.V.N.P.*, XI, pp. 238-39.
20. Dard, p. 449.
  21. *S. V. N. P.*, XI, No. 50, p. 773; for full text of the prophecy see Appendix *Kashful-Ghitā*, pp. 28-33.
  22. *S. V. N. P.*, XI, No. 50, p. 774.
  23. *Ibid.*, from *Akhbār-i-Ām*, Lāhore, Decēber 3, 1898. "Akhbār" was a bi-weekly Urdū paper published by Hindūs which began in 1897 and received warnings from Government as early as 1897 and 1898.
  24. A reference to the case brought against Ahmad by Henry Martyn Clark of C.M.S. in Amritsar in the court at Gurdāspur during August, 1898, discussed below.
  25. *S. V. N. P.*, XI, No. 50, pp. 774-75, from *Paisāh Akhbār*, Lāhore, December 1, 1898. *Paisāh Akhbār* was established in 1887 by Maulavī Mahbūb Ālam, a Rāj-pūt Muslim. The paper, often quoted in this study, was described in the Punjāb Press reports of 1905 as follows: "It deals with general questions of the day and contains extracts from other newspapers. It first appeared in January, 1887, under the title *Himmat*, but that name was afterwards changed to *Paisāh Akhbār* (87). One of the most popular papers in Lāhore. Its tone and style are excellent; exercises good influence on the public. It is inclined to be seditious in tone and requires watching. In 1896, had to be warned for publishing a seditious article on the Calcuttā riots, and narrowly avoided prosecution. Has lately been well conducted. Has by far the largest circulation in the Punjāb on account of its cheapness . . ."
  26. Dard, p. 449, says that Muhammad Husain "bought a sharp dagger." See also, *Paisāh Akhbār*, December 17, 1898, in *S. V. N. P.*, No. 52, p. 803.
  27. Dard, p. 450; *S. V. N. P.*, No. 52, p. 803.
  28. *S. V. N. P.*, XII, No. 2, pp. 18-19, *Akhbār-i-Ām*, January 4, 1899.
  29. *Ibid.*, No. 10, p. 141, *Akhbār-i-Ām* and *Paisāh Akhbār*, February 27, 1899. For full details of the trial and its documents, see Dard, pp. 450-88. Dard indicates in a footnote (p. 487) that he saw the text of the agreement at the Gurdāspur Records Office.
  30. *Nūr-i-Afshān* was the principal organ of the Punjābī Christian missionaries, founded at Ludhiānā in 1873. It consistently attacked both Ahmadiyāh and Sunnī Muslims as well as Ahl-i-Hadīth and Ārya Samāj. For details of its operation, see Barrier and Wallace, *The Punjāb Press*, p. 99.
  31. Dard, p. 125, cites articles, dated March 19, April 2, and April 16, 1885.
  32. *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society*, 1891-92, London, p. 115.
  33. Dard, p. 127.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 287-88.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 294.
36. *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society*, 1894, pp. 119-22.
37. *Ibid.*, 1895, pp. 167-68.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 169.
39. Dard, p. 313.
40. *S. V. N. P.*, V, No. 38, pp. 316-17 from *Rahbar-i-Hind*, Lāhore, September 5, 1892, and *Sahifa-i-Qadāī*, Delhī, *idem*. Earliest notice of the new tract appeared in *al-Hakam*, March 13, 1898, *S. V. N. P.*, XI, No. 16, p. 237.
41. *S. V. N. P.*, XI, No. 16, p. 237, *Nūr-i-Afshān*, April 8, 1898.
42. *Ibid.*, No. 23, p. 347, *al-Hakam*, May 13, 1898.
43. *Ibid.*, No. 24, p. 360, *Sat Dharam Parchārak*, May 27, 1898. This paper is significant as it began early (1889) with a circulation that rose to 1,900 copies an issue by 1905. Its editor was Lālā Munshī Rām, a radical leader of the Ārya Samāj. The British report of 1901 described it as "generally good" although by 1905 it was "anti-British." (Barrier and Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 135.)
44. *S. V. N. P.*, XI, No. 27, p. 406. No record of the publication of a pamphlet with this title has been discovered during this study. In 1899, Ahmad did publish "A Cry of Pain" in English as a response to "Ummahāt."
45. *Ibid.*, No. 34, p. 521, *Nūr-i-Afshān*, August 5, 1898.
46. *Ibid.*, *al-Hakam*, July 27, 1898.
47. *Ibid.*, No. 35, p. 542, *Nūr-i-Afshān*, August 19, 1898.
48. "A Cry of Pain," Lāhore, 1899, pp. 2-7. It is significant to note the number of times Ahmadīs "memorialized" the Government during later years.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
51. "My Attitude Towards the British Government," Lāhore, 1895.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
54. "Jihād and the British Government," Lāhore, 1900, p. 5.
55. First published in *Review of Religions*, vol. VII, No. 7, July, 1908. The quotation is from an introduction to a reprint on p. 239 of Alī Alhaj, *Islām and Its Comparison*. The article was also republished in 1947 by the Lāhore branch on behalf of its "Promotion of Inter-Communal Peace and Harmony."
56. Alhaj (ed.), *Islām*, p. 259.
57. Government of India, Home Department, Political File A, Proceedings of November, 1912, Nos. 46-47, pp. 1-2. The distortions of information throughout are noteworthy.

## INĀYATULLĀH KHĀN MASHRIQĪ AND THE KHĀKSĀR MOVEMENT

Y. B. MATHUR

Ināyatullāh Khān, popularly known as Allāmā Mashriqī, was the founder of the Khāksār movement. He was born on August 25, 1888, at Ichhrā—a village about five miles from Lāhore. At the age of 18, he established a new record in the University for M. A. examination in Mathematics. Then he went to Christ College, Cambridge, and became a Wrangler. He was also chosen a member of the International Congress of Orientalists. From 1907 onwards, he worked almost entirely in the North-Western Frontier Province, with a brief appointment as an assistant secretary in the Department of Education, Health and Lands in the Government of India. He wrote a book entitled *Tazkarā*, which he described as an attempt at applying the teachings of the *Qurān* and the *Hadīth* to the conditions of modern life. The orthodox Indian Muslims, however, regarded it as the work of an agnostic.

*Khāksār* is a compound Persian word, made up of *khāk* and *sār*. *Khāk* is 'dust' and *sār* is 'like,' that is to say, a Khāksār is one who is as humble as dust. The Khāksār movement, founded by Allāmā Mashriqī, was not limited to the Muslims alone. It was open to everyone irrespective of caste, creed, religion, nationality or birth. The motto of this movement was discipline, its line of action social service and its aim peace—the essence of Islām and every other religion. The organization was initially a non-political and non-communal one and had, among its votaries, some non-Muslims as well. It aimed at the improvement of physical and spiritual health, development of individual and collective character and the ending of all controversies through extensive social service, strict discipline and all-embracing love. There was no membership fee.

In order to carry out the task of regeneration and remoulding the people, Khāksārs laid down certain fundamental principles :

1. A Khāksār should lead a pure devotional life consistent with his religion and deny himself every kind of temptation.

2. He must always wear *khākī* dress. This will bring about uniformity in the rank in all respects. It will be cheap and available for all. It will be simple and unpresuming. A man in *khākī* will not lag behind when called upon to do public or social service.
3. A Khāksār must always carry a shovel or *belchā*. Apart from being an emblem of labour this instrument is useful in many ways. You can bake over it. You can dig, cut and clean with it; in short, there are One Hundred and Thirty-One ways in which this instrument has been found to be useful.
4. A badge should always be stuck on the right upper arm of a Khāksār on his *khākī* dress to indicate that he belongs to a universal brotherhood.
5. The Khāksārs of the same locality should, under their commander, parade, march and exercise for at least fifteen minutes every day to keep them fit, trained and ready for service.
6. Every Khāksār should necessarily perform some sort of public or social service every day and report to his commander . . .
7. A Khāksār should try to make as many friends as he can.
8. He must be humble in his ways and should always be ready to humiliate himself to win friends.
9. He must never discuss with anyone religion or politics.
10. He must avoid quarrels and disputes.
11. He must never be prejudiced against or feel animus towards anybody.
12. Wastage of time and that of money is not permissible to a Khāksār. He must feel himself accountable for every second lost and every pie spent.
13. He must develop within himself martial qualities and soldierly attributes.
14. A Khāksār should always be honest, punctual and truthful.
15. The mutual salutation between the Khāksārs should be in the military fashion.
16. A Khāksār should always try to make his purchases from a brother Khāksār and he in return should make the least profit.
17. A Khāksār must be silent, calm and watchful.
18. He should never expect or accept any return for his public or social service.
19. He should try to avoid all obligations, so much so that, with the exception of his close relatives, his equal soldiers, or superior

officers, he should not take anything without paying for it.<sup>1</sup>

The Khāksārs were to work every day in the *mohallās* and circles. Opportunity for corporate living with friends and co-workers was provided by organizing for them periodical camps. The camps were the real schools for teaching unity, discipline and fraternity, social service, humility and spiritual values. They were the real instruments of progress and reform and had their own laws and traditions. Everybody was assigned to a specified field of activity.

The original directorate of the Anjuman-i-Khāksārs was vested in an executive committee consisting of (1) Ināyatullāh Khān Mashriqī, (2) Muftī Sāhib, Mozang, Lāhore, (3) Masūd Ahmad Khān, B. Sc., of Lāhore, (4) M. A. Majid, M. A., of Lāhore, and (5) Hakīm Muhammad Dīn of Lāhore. The organization provided for a Dictator (Amīr), and commanders of the various grades—Sar Sālār, Sālār-i-Idārā, Sipā-Sālār, Khāksārs, etc.<sup>2</sup>

Allāmā Mashriqī, the founder of the movement, had the supreme control. He exercised absolute and dictatorial powers. The ranking of officers in the organization itself was in the following descending order.<sup>3</sup>

|                                      |     |  |
|--------------------------------------|-----|--|
| (1) Amīr                             | ... | Dictator   |
| (2) Sālār-i-Akbar or<br>Sālār-i-Zilā | ... | District Commander   |
| (3) Sālār-i-Idārā Markaziā           | ... | Assistant District Commander   |
| (4) Sālār-i-Ālā                      | ... | Commander of 12 Jamāts   |
| (5) Sar Sālār                        | ... | Commander of 3 Jamāts  |
| (6) Sālār-i-Mohallā                  | ... | Commander of one Mohallā   |
| (7) Sālār-i-Idārā                    | ... | Assistant Commander of a<br>Mohallā appointed during<br>camps and manoeuvres |
| (8) Pāk-bāzes                        | ... | Senior Jānbāzes  |
| (9) Jānbāzes                         | ... | Signatories of the "blood-<br>pledge"  |
| (10) Khāksārs                        | ... | Privates   |

The Jānbāzes occupied a position of special importance in the hierarchy. They were required to sign, in their own blood, a pledge in the presence of a responsible leader. The pledge ran :

Respected Allāmā Ināyatullāh Mashriqī. Greetings. I regard myself in the presence of God as one of the worst sinners. I hereby

declare that from today I place my life, wealth and everything else bestowed on me by the Almighty at the disposal of your great Institution in the service of God and Islām. If I disobey the orders of God and Islām, may I be consigned to hell on the day of resurrection. May God accept my pledge in blood. I submit the pledge to the Khāksār Central Institution, which has undertaken the duty of guiding the Muslims according to the injunction of God and the Prophet. I pray that the Almighty may give me strength to observe this pledge faithfully.<sup>4</sup>

It was claimed that there were at that time in India about 7,397 Khāksārs, including 649 Jānbāzes. Implicit obedience to the commands of the Amīr was demanded of the Khāksārs generally and the Jānbāzes in particular. The hold of Allāmā Mashriqī on persons who signed the "blood pledge" was very considerable, and it was this aspect of the movement that was viewed by Government with grave suspicion.<sup>5</sup>

In the Punjāb by November, 1933, Allāmā Mashriqī himself claimed to have between five and six thousand volunteers and to have established branches in this province at a number of places in Lāhore city and in the districts of Amritsar, Gujrānwālā, Sargodhā, Ferozepore, Jullundur, Sheikhūpurā and Hoshiārpur. Apart from Lāhore, Amritsar and Saloh, a village in Jullundur district, however, no branch seemed to have been active in the rest of the province. The conduct of the Khāksārs in the Punjāb had hitherto been unexceptionable: they did nothing but drill with their *khākī* clothes and *belchās*, performed occasional social service and appeared in formation at Muhammadan festivals. Some notice was obtained by the despatch of a party of nine Khāksārs from Lāhore on July 25, 1933, for a tour of the holy places of Mesopotamia and Arabia, via Baluchistān, Persia and Nejd, and also later in the year by a tour by a party of Khāksārs of North-West Frontier Province to Amritsar and back. It is difficult to estimate the membership of the Anjumān with any accuracy, but there were probably not more than six or seven hundred members in this province. Allāmā Mashriqī had incurred the hostility of the Ahrārs and the movement had made no great progress.<sup>6</sup>

Outside the Punjāb, Mashriqī claimed to have organized branches at Bangalore, Madrās, Sītāpur and Peshāwar. Of the first three places we have no information but the branch at Peshāwar was definitely active. The inception in the North-West Frontier Province of a movement, whose organization followed closely that of the Red Shirts, was regarded with apprehension by the local authorities, and orders were passed in

November, 1932, limiting recruitment to 250 and further restricting its outward activities in various ways. Allāmā Mashriqī soon fell foul of the Peshāwar authorities by ordering his Khāksārs to salute Roshan Lāl, a revolutionary and a member of the Naujawān Bhārat Sabhā. After that the Intelligence Department of the province reported on various occasions the connection with the movement of men of "objectionable" political views. The Peshāwar branch also came to notice by inaugurating a special form of spade-fighting drill, a combination of *gatkābāzī* and bayonet fighting. This was stopped around November, 1933, under Ināyatullāh's orders.<sup>7</sup>

The Gurdwārā Shahīdganj agitation in July, 1935, gave Allāmā Mashriqī an opportunity which he was not slow to seize. His support of the agitation gave considerable impetus to his movement.<sup>8</sup> The greatest measure of success, however, was achieved at Amritsar in spite of opposition from the Ahrārs. In January, 1934, the Amritsar volunteers numbered not more than 30 and it was believed that differences of opinion among Khāksār communities of the various *mohallās* in Amritsar were responsible for lack of enthusiasm. The Ahrārs of the Punjāb had always opposed Allāmā Mashriqī and his party and, when the Ahrārs failed to give any material support to the Shahīdganj agitation, the Khāksār movement in Amritsar gained in popularity. Maulavī Ismāil Ghaznavī devoted a considerable amount of his time to the movement and, by the end of September, 1935, the Khāksārs of Amritsar were organizing weekly parades in the city at which volunteers marched in quasi-military formation, armed with *belchās*. During the month of October, Khāksār parades at Amritsar became more frequent and at the beginning of November it was estimated that the Khāksār volunteers numbered approximately 175.

A branch of the Khāksār Anjuman was opened in Gujrāt in 1934. Allāmā Mashriqī paid frequent visits to that district as a result of which considerable progress was made. In October, 1934, a branch of the Khāksār organization known as the "Sword Party" was opened in Gujrānwālā. This party paraded the city bāzārs with naked swords borrowed from the local theatrical club. These parades ceased when the local authorities issued a warning that the processionists were rendering themselves liable to action under Section 107, Criminal Procedure Code. During October, 1935, Mashriqī visited Chakwāl in the Jhelum district and enlisted an important recruit in the person of Rājā Muhammad Sarfarāz Khān, a member of the Punjāb Legislative Council. The Rājā,

who had influence in the Jhelum district, was appointed a Sālār-i-Akbar.<sup>9</sup>

On October 27, 1935, the Khāksārs of Lāhore arranged a "mock war" in the Municipal Gardens, outside Delhī Gate. Crackers were used to represent bombs and "wounded" men were removed to a "field hospital." Allāmā Mashriqī arrived after the "war" had concluded, was given a salute by a guard-of-honour consisting of 170 Khāksārs armed with swords and spades and later inspected the guard, accompanied by Rājā Muhammad Sarfarāz Khān. He addressed the parade and, although the major portion of his speech was inaudible, he was heard to say that the Khāksārs should unite and oppose force with force.<sup>10</sup>

On November 9 and 10, similar operations took place at Amritsar. One hundred and fifty Khāksār volunteers paraded with a band in the Anjuman Park and later erected a camp where they spent the night. The next morning the volunteers were inspected by Abdur Rahmān, Sālār-i-Akbar, and it was noticed that 20 Unit Commanders were armed with daggers and swords. The "mock war" which followed was carried out in the presence of about 10,000 people on a plot of land enclosed by *kanāts*; in the centre was a circle of huts representing a fort. The Khāksār volunteers were divided into two parties, one of which garrisoned the "fort," while the other detailed off to besiege it.<sup>11</sup> The attack started at 2 p.m., crackers being used to represent bombs and the siege lasted until 5 p.m. when the "prisoners," including the "commander" of the fort, were produced before the Sālār-i-Akbar, Abdur Rahmān. Upon the besieged party making a complete submission, the parade observed a minute's silence for those who had been "killed and wounded" in the battle. After saluting the "Sālār-i-Akbar," the parade was dismissed.<sup>12</sup> In November, 1935, the Khāksārs of Gujrānwālā held a "mock war" outside the city which was witnessed by about 400 spectators.<sup>13</sup> Late in the same month another similar demonstration was staged outside Gujrāt city.<sup>14</sup>

At this time, Allāmā Mashriqī announced that Ibn-i-Saud, the king of the Hedjāz, would invite 1,000 Khāksārs to the Muslim holy places on the occasion of the Hajj pilgrimage. It was said that these men would be selected when the Khāksārs' camp met at Delhī in the month of December. According to press reports, the Government of India had, after making enquiries, contradicted this report with the result that a large number of Khāksār enthusiasts accused Allāmā Mashriqī of lying. He was subjected to severe criticism by his own Sālārs. Another



announcement he made was that the Nizām of Hyderābād would be coming to Delhī in December, would visit the Khāksār camp and take a salute from the volunteers. This also failed to attract any recruits, for this announcement was again contradicted by the Government. During the latter part of November, a poster appeared in Lāhore over the signatures of Pīr Jamāit Alī Shāh, leader of the Shahīdganj agitation, in which the Pīr gave his blessing to the Khāksār movement and ordered all Muhammadans to take part in the coming Khāksār celebration at Delhī. However, in a statement published later in the press, Jamāit Alī Shāh cancelled his previous announcement alleging that it was obtained from him under a misapprehension. Reports received on December 19, 1935, showed that the repudiation of Mashriqī's pilgrimage scheme, the statement that the Nizām of Hyderābād would not attend the Delhī party and the announcement of Pīr Jamāit Alī Shāh were all severe blows to Allāmā Mashriqī's prestige and it was unlikely that the Khāksār movement would make any further progress in the Punjāb.<sup>15</sup>

During 1936, 1937 and 1938, altogether 23, 40 and 57 "military camps" were held by the Khāksārs in the Punjāb. "Mock wars," in fact, formed their most important activity. Camps were organized at important centres, bodies of Khāksārs drawn from local and outside sources paraded in military formation for a specific number of days, and the camps terminated with sham fights in the course of which sticks, spades and crackers were freely used by "the opposing armies."<sup>16</sup> An innovation in "armament" was made at the annual camp held in Rāwalpindī district from April 15-17, 1938, when a new form of spade was brought into use. This spade was provided with a detonator which was fixed to the right side of the spade and consisted of an iron bolt worked by a spring. This bolt after striking against the iron block, upon which the detonating mixture was placed, produced a loud report. Nevertheless, to a casual observer a body of Khāksārs on parade, with their *khākī* uniforms and spades, was no more than a fatigue party of badly trained soldiers.<sup>17</sup>

In August, 1936, it was reported that the Sikhs of Gujrānwālā had taken serious objection to the route marches organized by the Khāksār volunteers in front of places of worship. But for the intervention of the police, those demonstrations would have led to communal outbreaks.<sup>18</sup>

An All-India Khāksār Camp was held at Delhī from March 25-28, 1937. The attendance on this occasion was confined to Sālārs and Jānbāzes only. On this occasion, the parades and sham fights were

attended by uniformed women volunteers, among whom the daughter of Allāmā Mashriqī was prominent. The camp had an interesting sequel and indicated the strong hold the movement had on its followers. In May, 1937, Muhammad Akram, a Khāksār of Gujrānwālā, was flogged under the order of Dr Ghulām Muhammad, a local Sālār, for failure to attend the Delhī Khāksār Camp in spite of his promise to be present. Muhammad Akram willingly submitted to the corporal punishment and was subsequently congratulated by his companions on his spirit of self-sacrifice and sense of discipline.<sup>19</sup>

On August 21, 1938, during a "mock war" at Lāhore, Tāyab Alī Shāh, a young Khāksār received fatal injuries from a fuse which he was carrying under his armpit along with a bag full of crackers. The fuse caught fire, setting the crackers ablaze, and caused severe burns to Tāyab Alī Shāh, who succumbed to his injuries in hospital two days later. It is significant that no complaint in the matter was made by the survivors of Tāyab Alī Shāh, and it was, in fact, at their specific request that the postmortem examination of the dead man's body was dispensed with by the police.<sup>20</sup>

During these years Allāmā Mashriqī maintained his hold on popular imagination by advertising grandiloquent schemes for the betterment of the Muslim community in and outside India. In 1937, six Khāksārs from Hyderābād state were sent to Hedjāz with letters from Allāmā Mashriqī to King Ibn-i-Saud and the minister of finance to the Hedjāz Government. King Ibn-i-Saud declined to accept the delivery of the letters, but the Khāksār deputation was able to interview the minister of finance. The deputation demanded free transport for themselves and special facilities for future Khāksār pilgrims, but was unsuccessful in obtaining any of these concessions. The members of the deputation distributed a great deal of propaganda literature in and around Meccā, but were apparently unable to found branches in Arabia.<sup>21</sup>

On January 17, 1938, a statement was made by Bashīr Ahmad Siddiqī, a prominent Khāksār leader of Peshāwar, to the effect that Allāmā Mashriqī intended to construct a fort in Lāhore, for the purpose of establishing a training centre for the Khāksārs from all over India. This fort was to be built by Khāksār labourers. Nothing was done in furtherance of this scheme.<sup>22</sup>

In September, 1938, Allāmā Mashriqī, accompanied by Muhammad Sādiq, Khāksār leader of Lyāllpur, proceeded to Bombay en route to Cairo to attend the All-World Muslim Conference on Palestine which

took place in the month of October, 1938. They, however, failed to secure the grant of visas from the Consul General for Egypt and consequently returned to the Punjāb.<sup>23</sup>

On December 6, 1938, in a poster issued by Allāmā Mashriqī, it was stated that 10,000 Khāksārs would proceed to Palestine towards the end of the month to prevent "the destruction of Muslims by the British Government in that country." The announcement remained an empty boast.<sup>24</sup>

It may be observed that Allāmā Mashriqī claimed that the Khāksār movement was entirely non-political and was designed solely for the advancement of Muslim interests. But in 1939, he formulated three "non-political" demands, the acceptance of which by the Government had been repeatedly and strongly urged by the Khāksār leaders in their public utterances and in the *Al-Islāh*, the Khāksār organ. These demands were :

1. The establishment of a broadcasting station at Ichhrā, the headquarters of the movement near Lāhore, for the purpose of disseminating the true teaching of the *Qurān* and for the delivery of a common Khutbā on the occasion of Īd prayers.
2. The organization of a Government agency for the collection of *zakāt* with a view to the establishment of a Khāksār Bait-ul-Māl.
3. The grant of permission to Government servants to join the Khāksār movement.<sup>25</sup>

The demands were given wide publicity by the Khāksārs in a poster which appeared in Rāwalpindī on August 15, 1938, and it was stated that, if the demands were not conceded, there would be bloodshed.

It was in 1939 that the Khāksārs first came into conflict with the authorities of the United Provinces over the Shīā-Sunnī dispute. Allāmā Mashriqī went to Lucknow to bring about a settlement, but the Ahrārs<sup>26</sup> did not welcome this move. This greatly annoyed the Allāmā and he ordered his followers to use *belchās* against them contrary to the orders of the Government.<sup>27</sup> He was immediately put in prison but was released shortly afterwards.

In March, 1940, when serious disturbance broke out in Lāhore, on the eve of the session of the All-India Muslim League, the Khāksārs marched in a procession through the main streets and came into conflict with the Punjāb Government which objected to the use of *belchās* and "military formations." This was resented by the Khāksārs and Muslims in general,

especially in view of the fact that the Sikhs carried on their persons the *kirpāns*. Yet Mr Jinnāh and other leaders of the League did not take any initiative at this time to have the affair settled. The Khāksārs, therefore, took to defiance of authority seeking shelter in the mosques in Lāhore. In police firing, 32 Khāksārs were killed. 1,700 were arrested and sentenced to imprisonment.

Allāmā Mashriqī, who bitterly criticized the Government's action, was arrested on the night of March 19 at Delhī and removed to Vellore Jail in Madrās.<sup>28</sup> In the beginning of June, 1940, the Khāksār organization was declared unlawful by a number of provincial governments. Notifications were also issued banning the performance of military drill and the wearing in public of a dress resembling a military uniform. This action was taken in order to prevent the growth of "private armies" in India and to stop military activities on the part of non-official volunteer organizations.<sup>29</sup> But in August, 1940, when the Khāksārs assured the Government that they would abide by the law, notifications declaring them to be an unlawful association in Delhī and Punjāb were withdrawn.<sup>30</sup> This was followed by agitations<sup>31</sup> in the U.P., Derā Ismāil Khān<sup>32</sup> and Ahmedābād<sup>33</sup> for the release of the Khāksār leader.

In May, 1941, the Khāksārs contemplated concerted action to bring pressure on the Government and proposed to adopt the same tactics as they had adopted at Lāhore—entering into mosques armed with *belchās* and making those mosques the bases of operations or demonstrations. A representative meeting of leading Khāksārs was held in Peshāwar to finalize the plan. The organizers of this meeting were officially warned not to proceed with it, but they decided to ignore the warning.<sup>34</sup> The Khāksārs were declared to be an unlawful association by all the provincial governments in India at the beginning of June, 1941.<sup>35</sup> Allāmā Mashriqī announced that he would start a "potential fast," or partial hunger strike on October 19, 1941. This news produced much excitement among the Khāksārs in Delhī, Punjāb, the U.P., Sind and Hyderabad. The Central Government invited opinions on the issue of removal of restrictions on the Khāksārs. A number of provincial governments expressed their agreement to the withdrawal of the ban. On September 23, 1941, the Central Assembly accepted a motion by Sir Sayyid Razā Alī recommending the lifting of the ban on the Khāksārs. The Punjāb Government also agreed to the removal of the ban provided a clear, unambiguous statement was made by the Khāksār leader that, as long as the War lasted, social service would be performed in an individual

capacity and that there would be no use of uniforms, badges or symbols.<sup>36</sup>

Allāmā Mashriqī agreed to this proposal and, on January 16, 1942, issued the required instructions to his followers to eschew the military aspects of the movement for the period of the War. He laid down :

- (1) The period of half-an-hour's drill previously prescribed for Khāksārs to be replaced by half-an-hour's *ishā* prayer; (2) Khāksārs to assemble at the summon of a bugle at fixed times and to stand in a row, but not to take part in any drill; to remain smart and disciplined, and obey the orders of caution given to them by the Sālār-i-Mohallā; to wear *khākī* dress occasionally and a red badge equal in size to a rupee and to use *belchā* for social service only; (3) Social service without discrimination of caste or creed to be performed after prayers; (4) Every Khāksār to march, rather walk, to salute his acquaintances in a military style and to perform exercise of a military nature for at least two minutes a day; (5) Khāksār camps to continue at a distance from inhabited area; and (6) Leaders to enlist two thousand followers each to raise the strength of the movement to 25 lakhs by September 15, 1942.

Allāmā Mashriqī was released from jail on January 19, 1942, but the ban on the movement continued to be in force. He was given complete freedom to meet the Khāksār leaders but not permitted to leave the Madrās presidency<sup>37</sup> or to make any communication to the press. The Allāmā violated the conditions on which he was released. The Government displayed a circular signed by him which clearly stated that everything possible must be done to maintain the military spirit of the Khāksārs even though drilling, wearing uniforms, and the use of arms were suspended temporarily. Similarly, another circular in its possession showed that he had issued instructions for the recruitment of a large number of Khāksārs. On being confronted with these circulars, he did not deny that these were issued by him. On the contrary, he sent to the Government a long letter of an argumentative nature which led them to the opinion that "he was not a very easy person to do business with."<sup>38</sup>

The Allāmā's new instructions led to the revival of the Khāksār activities in Delhī, Punjāb, North-Western Provinces and the United Provinces. Everywhere in Delhī the Khāksārs appeared in *khākī* shirts and *salwārs* and wore the prescribed armed badge.<sup>39</sup> In Punjāb there

was a revival of their activities in a modified form in spite of the fact that the actual working of the new programme was hampered by the existing ban on the organization. Such activities consisted mainly of attendance at small gatherings and congregational prayers and the performance of social service.<sup>40</sup> Efforts were also made by Muhammad Aslam Chishtī to enrol more Khāksār students in the movement. But the success<sup>41</sup> was not appreciable. Only some students of the M.A.O. College at Amritsar and the Zamīndār College in Gujrāt volunteered for membership.

The total number of the Khāksārs at this time was several thousand.<sup>42</sup> Owing to public pressure, the Government lifted the ban on the organization on December 28, 1942, and also cancelled orders confining its leader to the province of Madrās.<sup>43</sup> But it sternly warned him to abolish the military features of the organization.<sup>44</sup>

On January 3, 1943, the Allāmā issued a press statement from Madrās asking for the recruitment of 1,000 Mujāhidīn and the enrolment<sup>45</sup> of one lakh ordinary members. But in June, when the Khāksārs organized a "military camp"<sup>46</sup> in the Punjāb, the Provincial Government urged the Government of India to reimpose restrictions on them. This was not done but the Allāmā was "finally warned"<sup>47</sup> on July 19 to stop unlawful activities. Three days later, he issued orders to the Khāksārs to remove the red badges from their arms at once. He also directed them not to wear the headdress<sup>48</sup> but only to cover their heads with white handkerchiefs at the time of prayers, and prohibited military display at camps which were "exclusively reserved for congregational prayers, religious and social lectures and sports."<sup>49</sup> Objectionable activities thus ceased for some time, but Mashriqī continued to complain that "a most determined campaign"<sup>50</sup> was being waged against the Khāksārs. This very much disheartened him and he expressed willingness to even suspend the organization.<sup>51</sup> Khāksār prestige had now come to "a low ebb"<sup>52</sup> and subsequent efforts to recruit more persons in the organization were not marked by much success in the N.W.F.P.,<sup>53</sup> Sind<sup>54</sup> and Bombay.<sup>55</sup> The policy of distributing offices to wealthy Khāksārs brought further discredit to the organization. The Allāmā himself admitted at a private meeting in 1943 that his "movement had collapsed."<sup>56</sup>

Certain other factors also brought disrepute to the organization. In Bombay, the Khāksārs carrying copies of the *Qurān* with them greatly annoyed the Muslim masses who considered this disrespectful to the Holy Book.<sup>57</sup> In the Punjāb a Khāksār, who objected to flogging for

misappropriating funds, was assaulted by six of his co-workers in a Lāhore mosque on July 25, on Allāmā Mashriqī's orders, but he managed to escape and reported the matter to the police. The police registered a case and arrested the accused. The Khāksār complainant was denounced as a traitor but the six accused were sentenced to a year's rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100 each. In another case, 30 Khāksārs who marched through Lāhore city and contravened orders prohibiting parades and drills of a military nature were arrested and sentenced to imprisonment<sup>58</sup> varying from one to two years. These incidents proved setbacks to the movement. Another serious incident was an attack made by a Khāksār, Rafīq Sābir of Lāhore, on Mr Jinnāh in Bombay on July 26, 1943. Some of the Khāksārs became critical of Allāmā Mashriqī's leadership and suggested disbandment of the movement.

The Allāmā made a last bid to reorganize the movement by altering the basic ideology of the movement. Accordingly, in 1945, a department of politics, known as Bāb al-siyāsāt, was opened with headquarters at Bombay to lay down a policy for the attainment of "immediate and right sort of independence for India."<sup>59</sup> Sayyid Allāh Bakhsh Shāh, who was previously entrusted with the task of carrying on a campaign to promote Hindū-Muslim unity, was to head it. This department instructed the Khāksārs to keep contacts with local political leaders of the Congress, Muslim League, Hindū Mahāsabhā and the Communist Party and explain to them the importance of the movement. It also advised the Muslims to stop cow-sacrifice. Yet the organization froze the distribution of 24,000 copies of its pamphlet on the subject. This showed the ambivalence of leaders on the policy to be pursued. The movement completely collapsed shortly afterwards.<sup>60</sup>

On August 19, 1945, Allāmā Mashriqī wrote to the Government of India that "his undertaking to them ceased with the cessation of hostilities and that he should be permitted to resume prewar activities."<sup>61</sup> The Government of India conveyed its decision to him on March 30, 1946, in these words :

As regards your request you do not appear to understand the position. While there is even now no objection to the Khāksārs as a legal organization, indulging in such activities as do not offend against the law, your statement . . . obviously could not mean that the Khāksārs would be at liberty to resume illegal activities after the War. Government of India notifications . . . prohibiting drilling and the wearing of uniforms of military type are still in force, restricting

the holding of camps and parades by political and communal organizations and banning altogether any such camps or parades held for purposes of performing drills or movements of a military nature. These apply to the Khāksārs as much as to any other organization. The Government of India therefore cannot agree to the proposed statement forwarded with your letter, dated August 19, 1945. Any statement you may wish to publish must make it perfectly clear that the activities of the Khāksārs must remain strictly within the law.<sup>62</sup>

This letter containing the Government's policy towards the Khāksārs was widely circulated.

Allāmā Mashriqī formally announced the disbandment of the organization after Independence<sup>63</sup> and spent the remaining years of his life in Pākistān and attempted to make a fresh political start. He founded Islām League in 1948 and vehemently opposed the principle of parity between East and West Pākistān till all units in West Pākistān emerged into one single unit on the basis of solidarity of West Pākistān. He wanted East and West Pākistān to be one unit and pleaded for one common language—Urdū—and one common culture—Islāmic—for the whole country. He also denounced Western democracy and Communism and demanded establishment of Islāmic democracy in the country. On April 2, 1957, he was expelled from the Islām League by a decision of the Council of the Islām League on the charge that he had failed to liberate Kashmīr owing to loss of mental equilibrium. He died of cancer at Lāhore on August 27, 1963, at the age of 75, after a protracted illness and was laid to rest at Ichhrā, Lāhore, the headquarters of the movement, in the presence of his admirers and relatives.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

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3. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.
4. Note by G. Ahmad, January 15, 1939, para 2, pp. 9-10, Home Political F. No. 71/39 of 1939.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 10.



6. Note, dated November 10, 1933, para 4, p. 3, Home Political F. 71/39 of 1939.
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9. *Ibid.*
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12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8
16. Note by G. Ahmad, January 15, 1939, p. 11.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
25. *Ibid.*
26. They were pro-Congress Muslims and wanted to maintain their position in the Congress by securing seats in its Working Committee.
27. Speech by Sir Sayyid Razā Ali in Council House, New Delhī, September 2, 1942.
28. *Ibid.*
29. Home Political (1) F. No. 28/3/1944.
30. Speech by Sir Richard Tottenham in Council House at New Delhī on September 2, 1942. See also Home Political (1), F. No. 28/2/1942.
31. Home Department Communique, June 5, 1941. Home Political (I), F. No. 26/2/1942—Political.
32. The Muslim associations of Derā Ismāil Khān passed the following resolution :  
 "This representative meeting of the Musalmāns of Derā Ismāil Khān vehemently demands from the Government of India, the immediate release of their beloved great leader Hazrat Allāmā Ināyatullāh Khān al-Mashriqī and in very strong words demands from the Government of the Punjāb that it should forthwith remove the charge of violence from the Khāksārs so that in the present regime of war the atmosphere may become pacified." See also Home Political F. No. 74/8/1940—Poll. (I)
33. Home Political (I), F. No. 74/7/1941.
34. Resolution regarding ban on the Khāksār movement, Home Department Political (Internal), F. No. 24/10/1942.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Ibid.*, para 3.
37. Home Political (Internal), F. No. 8/12/1942, p. 2.
38. Speech by Sir Richard Tottenham, September 2, 1942, Home Department Political (Internal), F. No. 24/10/1942.
39. Home Department (Intelligence Bureau), Note, dated October 20, 1942, para 3.

40. *Ibid.*, para 4.
41. Note on the Khāksār movement, Home Department (Political-Internal), F. No. 74/4/1941—Poll. (I), part III.
42. Home Department (Political-Internal), F. No. 74/4/1944—Poll. (I), part III, para 6.
43. Activities of Allamā Mashriqī and his followers after the lifting of the ban on the Khāksār organization, Home Department (Political-Internal), F. No.74/4/1941—Poll. (I), part III.
44. Addendum to the Note on the Khāksār movement (1943-45), Home Department (Political-Internal), F. No. 28/5/1943—Poll. (I).
45. The orders defined a Mujāhid as “one who was regular in his soldierly prayers, who was devoted to social studies irrespective of creed or colour, who wore *khākī* dress, including the red Khāksār insignia, and carried a small edition of the *Qurān* under his arm, and a *belchā* and the uniform of his rank ready and complete at his home.”
46. Note on the Khāksār movement, para 2, Home Department (Political-Internal), F. No. 28/5/1943—Poll. (I).
47. *Ibid.*
48. The prescribed headdress consisted of a white piece of cloth, one yard and a half square, worn in the Arab or Hājī fashion and secured by a 3/4 inch thick cord, the colour of the cord varying with the rank of the wearer. See also Home Department Political (Internal) Branch, F. No. 28/5/1943—Poll. (I).
49. Note on the Khāksār organization, dated April 8, 1943. Home Department Political (Internal) Branch, F. No. 28/5/ 1943—Poll. (I).
50. *Ibid.*, para 3.
51. *Ibid.*
52. Note on the Khāksār organization, dated November 8, 1943.
53. *Ibid.*
54. *Ibid.*
55. Home Department (Political-Internal), F. No. 74/4/1941—Poll. (I), part III.
56. Home Department (Political-Internal), F. No. 28/5/1943—Poll. (I)
57. *Ibid.*
58. Under Rule 56/58, Defence of India Rules.
59. Home Department (Political-Internal), F. No. 28/5/1943—Poll. (I).
60. *Ibid.*
61. Home Department Memorandum No. 28/4/1945—Poll. (I), dated March 16/19, 1946.
62. Extract from a letter No. 28/4/1945—Poll. (I), dated September 6, 1945, from the Government of India, Home Department to Ināyatullāh Khān Mashriqī, P.O. Ichhrā, Lāhore.
63. Pākistān High Commission Letter No. Inf : 6 (2)/69, dated February 4, 1969.

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